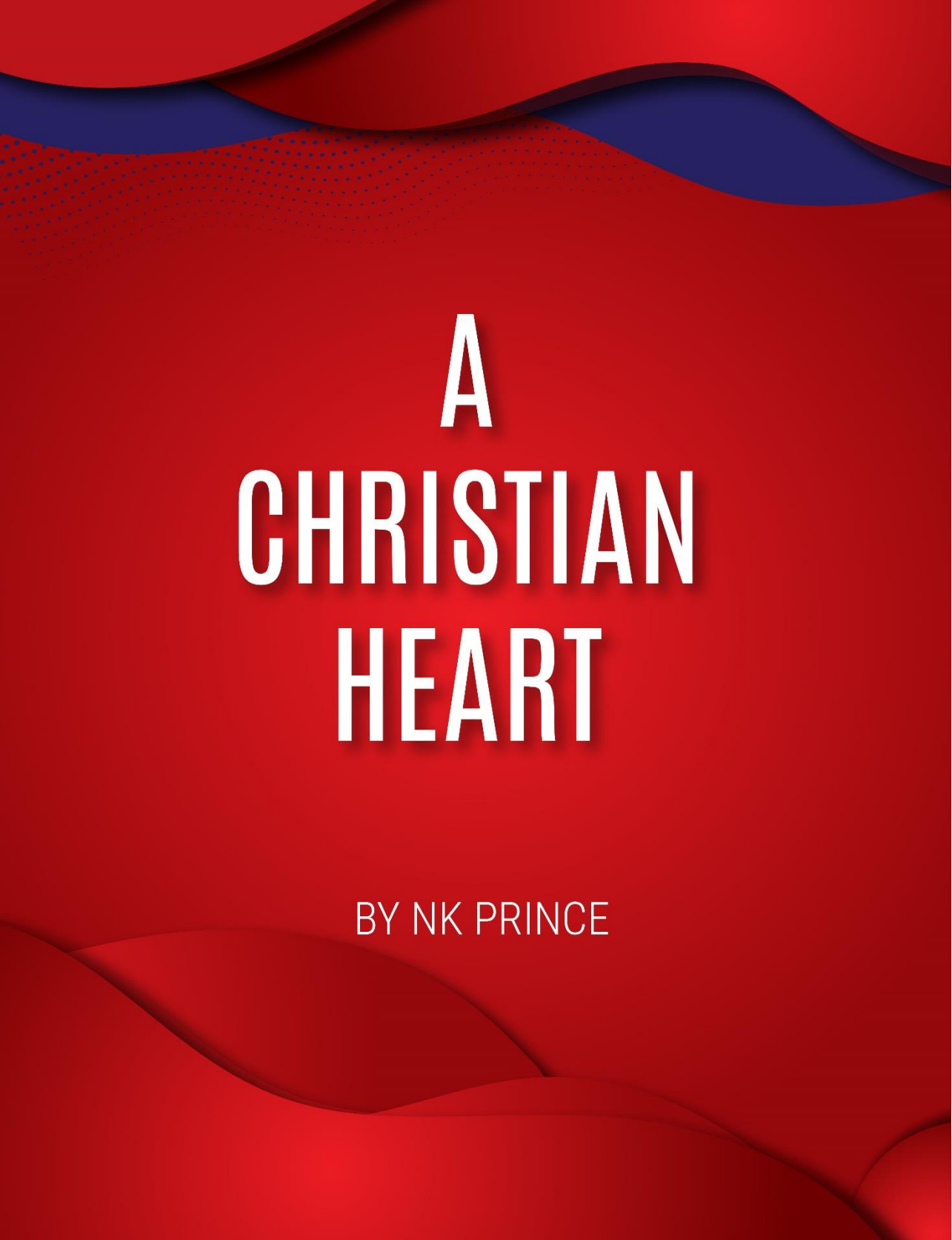




A CHRISTIAN HEART

BY NK PRINCE

PREFACE

Having been born into a Christian family, I had always believed that this, by default, meant I was a Christian. Although I confessed and believed myself to being a Christian, my actions completely contradicted my beliefs. Despite my knowledge of the Bible, however limited, I had no understanding of it. Thus, my life consisted of parties, alcohol, and drugs. Despite living a sinful lifestyle, I believed I was a child of God who would one day enter into heaven. My whole life I was surrounded by people who lived sinful lives, went to church on Sundays and worshipped as though they were angels. And because of my ignorance and my surroundings, I saw nothing wrong with my wicked lifestyle.

And yet, unconsciously, deep within my heart was a craving for a truth I did not even know existed. Even when I went out and “enjoyed” myself, I always felt empty and dissatisfied, as though nothing in this world was powerful enough to quench this thirst that has secretly invaded my heart. Although I had goals and ambitions, I always had this unshakable feeling that my life would amount to nothing. To some, this may seem like a trivial emotion or something you can just easily shake off; how I wish that were so. Such feelings are never realized until you figure out why you keep putting the blame for your failures on other people. Even if the tree is cut down, if its roots remain, it will grow back to a size much greater than before.

Suicidal thoughts don't just develop overnight; they develop over time, until one day what was once something so painful that all people dread it becomes the only way out, and death now becomes a solution you gladly, yet painfully welcome with open arms. I partied, drank, and laughed, but in my heart, there was no hope. Something had to give, a change needed to be made before it was too late. My whole life I've been undermined, my whole life I have been undermining myself; but how can I not, when I never knew who I was, when I never knew who God was? I have known humiliation, chained down by weakness, I knew what it was to lose, to be a failure, but I never knew what it was to be victorious.

I measured success by what I saw with my physical eyes—I had nothing. How can I not hate my peers who were succeeding all around me, how can I not hate and blame my family for things they had no control over? Love seemed like a weakness that was holding me back, whereas being heartless came easily and quite frankly more naturally than anything else.

By His grace, God called me to repentance. Just as apostle Paul's blindness led him to his breakthrough, and led him to his deliverance. I wish I could say that my surviving a car accident that I wasn't expected to survive, or receiving an asthma diagnosis was the major turning moment in my life that drove me to seek His face, but that isn't the case. There had to be something out there, something far greater than my despair, something far beyond human comprehension—otherwise, why would there be so much suffering? Even the most successful individuals in the world are suffering. At some time, mankind took a step down an uncharted path that led us into darkness.

So, when God called me to repentance, I had no doubts, for God's peace is evident even before it manifests in the physical, not as the world gives does He give. I accepted God's invitation, not as I willed, but as He willed. I opened my heart to His truth, and not to what I wanted to hear. What the

world had built in my heart needed to be broken down before He could patiently teach me and reveal to me the truth in His word. Listen, I'm not special, what I am is what you are. Think of anyone in the word of God who you consider to be the greatest prophet, pastor, or apostle: what they were is what you are, the only difference, they knew who they were, and you do not know who you are.

That is why your heart is full of fear, doubt, worry, jealousy, anger, unforgiveness, offense, hatred, selfish ambition, and sinful desires. It is time for a change; your time for freedom has come.

Willingness is 50% of the job, and God does the rest. So now, just as God blessed me, it would be a sin if I did not share with the world what God has given to me. This book is a collection of pieces God has used to build me up, teachings given to me by God. Just as they did for me, I pray that they may also do for you. We are blessed so that we can bless others. May God bless His word in our hearts in the mighty name of Jesus Christ.

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A CALL TO SERVITUDE

These days, for some reason, everyone wants to stand in front of a crowd and preach; It has become a symbol of modern Christianity. Everybody wants to experience the benefits of Christianity, but nobody is willing to put forth the effort. Christianity is by far the most popular religion in the world, with over 2 billion adherents. But are we headed in the right direction? Is the gospel being preached all across the world true to the word of God, or are we just feeding our emotions and deceiving ourselves?

We live in a time where Christians dread difficulties and utilize God's Word to condemn rather than free people. We live in a time when love has lost importance in our society, and hate is encouraged. Our churches no longer have the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the preaching ability of men has gained primacy in this day and age. The kingdom of God has been watered down to human wisdom.

Being a Christian means being a servant; being a Christian means serving others. God's mercy is the foundation of our relationship with Him; we receive because He chooses to give, not because we deserve it (Ephesians 2:8-9). We are all born with divine purpose, destined for greatness. In every one of us is a purpose that opposes human understanding. That is why, even those who claim to love you might turn on you when you obey God's call to serve Him. And yet, it is sinning that limits God's purpose in our lives; many have become slaves to unbelief.

We live in a time where Christians use the word of God as a tool to attack non-believers, a time where the word of God is used to judge and criticize others. Christians of today would rather scare non-believers into accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior rather than preach the gospel of love. We live in a time when love has taken a backseat to hatred, anger, and offense. Instead of sharing the good news, Christians would prefer to discuss the sinfulness of unbelievers. When was the last time you condemned your government's actions? When was the last time you prayed for your government, not your emotional prayers driven by selfish ambition, but prayers that ask for God's intervention and His will be done? Do you even know what loving your neighbor means? Fleshly desires have taken root in Christianity, and as such, Satan is using them to destroy our relationship with God.

Every Christian has a favourite scripture, a verse that they adore. If you ask as many Christians as you can about their favourite passage and a common theme will emerge. A Christian whose favourite passage is about loving your neighbor, forgiving others so that God may forgive you, or blessing those who curse you is nearly hard to find. People choose verses that agree with their fleshly desires. Christians of today are more concerned with receiving than they are with giving. Selfish ambition has taken root in the place of love.

When you read your bible, are you reading literature, a history book, a book on philosophy, or are you reading the Holy Spirit? How do you approach God? A heart that is full of unforgiveness cannot approach God. How is your relationship with Jesus? The Bible teaches us in the book of **1 John 4**, that God is love itself. Where there is love, there is God, and where there is God, there is freedom. It is impossible to achieve freedom without love.

"Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away."

1 Corinthians 13:8-10

What could be more perfect than love? As human beings, we are not capable of love, we do not know how to love. What we are, are vessels for love; we go to Jesus, and He anoints us with love.

There is no love in calling people names. Anti-Christ, witch, prostitute, drunkard, or whatever name that makes you feel better about your sins. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (**Romans 3:23**); this implies we're all in the same boat. It has never been about pointing out other people's flaws but has always been about lifting each other up. God blesses me so I can bless you; God blesses you so you can bless me. The challenges that we are facing today are exposing the true nature of our relationship with God, or rather, lack thereof. Sin is our biggest enemy. While you are busy holding a grudge against your neighbor, Satan is using that sin to torture you, to destroy your blessings before they even manifest.

Many of us are in positions that were not meant for us. Yet, we fail to see the truth in our situations because we believe that prosperity means God's grace. Many Christians today are ignorant of the fact that Satan has his own bag of blessings. Whatever it is that the eye can see, Satan is capable of blessing you with it. The only difference is that *his* blessings come with pain, sorrow, and destruction; they come with a great deal of suffering. As a Christian, how do you know that what you have received came from God? The love of the material has become a very powerful tool in the hands of Satan.

Are you led by your feelings and emotions, or are you led by the Holy Spirit? Every one of us desires something, something that is lacking in our lives. It could be a job, healing, breakthrough in your business, marriage, or whatever it may be that you do not have. You do not have it because you do not believe that you have it, you do not believe because sin has taken root in your life, and it is slowly killing your faith. Anything is possible to him who believes, believing is possessing (**Mark 9:23**).

My Bishop, Bishop Mabel, once said, *"Life is not a fridge full of food or driving a fancy car or living in a big house. Life is a heart that is full of God."* To be a Christian is to do for God. Being a Christian means understanding that when you give food to your neighbor, you are doing so for God. How can you be trusted with more if you cannot be trusted with the little that you have? You probably believe that when the Bible mentions what you have, it is referring to your possessions, right? If that was the case, Jesus would have certainly needed more than two fish and five loaves of bread to feed a crowd of five thousand. Your refusal to believe in the impossible is a testament to the unbelief rooted in your heart. What is impossible with men is possible with God (**Luke 18:27**).

Lend a helping hand, give advice, motivate, give food to the hungry, money to the needy; whatever you think is little, to God, it is great. That is why, instead of asking for more, Jesus thanked God for the two fish and five loaves of bread and was able to do the impossible with them.

We are too preoccupied with what we do not have, and such preoccupations are blinding us to the power of what we do have. If we cannot be trusted with what we have, how can He trust us with what He wants to give us? Whatever it is that you are crying for—it is not that God does not love, but it is because you are not ready for it. However, if you fail to recognize that the trials you are facing are there to prepare you, to strengthen you for what is to come, you will always be a slave to sin. Do not make the mistake of thinking age equals maturity; growing old does not mean growing mature. Maturity is a thing of the heart; maturity is a heart full of God's Word.

FAITH ACTS NOW

Faith is a natural, spiritual force that all humans are born with; it is not subject to mental acuity. The intelligence of men, or more accurately, the carnal man is incapable of comprehending God's might. Faith is a substance of belief, a thing of the heart. And yet, despite it being a powerful spiritual force, it is powerless on its own. Faith works hand in hand with humility, patience, obedience, and most importantly, love. As the book of James would attest, *"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also"* (**James 2:26**).

The Bible teaches us that love is the greatest of all spiritual gifts (**1 Corinthians 13:13**). Where there is love there is God, and where there is God there is freedom. All good things are born from love, nothing good is possible without love. Any good that is done without love may and will only lead to troublesome outcomes. It may not be instant, it may take months or even years, and eventually it will fail the test of time and crumble to the ground. How many times have you reminded someone of the good you did for them once? That is a sign that it was not done in love. The real power of a good act is not the act itself, but the spirit behind it. That is where freedom and slavery are. You either set them free, and set yourself free in the process, or you enslave them, enslaving yourself in the process. The mercy you give is the mercy you receive (**Matthew 5:8**). It can never be both, and there is no middle ground.

The Word of God is powerless without the Spirit of God, just as, the Spirit of God is powerless without the Word of God. Nothing is possible without the power of the Holy Spirit. Contrary to popular belief, however, being a Christian does not necessarily guarantee the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life. But then, how do you define Christianity, what makes you a Christian? Is it going to church? Is it being born into a Christian family? Is it praying in His name? You are holding grudges and refusing to forgive, there are people who you refuse to even greet. You are effectively an enemy of God, considering that the Bible teaches forgiveness and loving your enemy. So, I ask again, what makes you a Christian?

The Holy Spirit can never be deceived, it abides by the truth. The Holy Spirit is not a pet that you can just whistle and it will come rushing; it does not float around a person just because they claim to be a Christian. The Holy Spirit holds on to the Word of God that is in your heart, not to the knowledge of the Word, but the understanding of God's Word. This simply means, reading your Bible with understanding—that is, read your Bible and put it into action. The Word of God you put into action is the Word of God that is alive in your life. The Word of God that is in your heart is not the Word you know, but the Word you act upon.

Do you have the word of God in your heart, or do you *think* you have the word of God in your heart? When we talk of heart, we talk of spirit being; the real you. It is not the word that you know, but the one that you commit to your heart that makes all the difference. The word that you commit to your heart is the one that you put into action. I know a lot of Christians who know the bible from Genesis to Revelations, and yet, I have always wondered why I never see God's glory in their lives. Please understand me in this; many people today make the same mistake of measuring God's grace in their lives by what they have. Be it a high-paying job, a beautiful house, a car, money in the bank, good

health, or whatever else people consider to be *blessings*. People measure God's glory by what they see with their physical eyes.

Alright then, seeing as how poor Jesus was when He walked on this earth, and seeing as how He was more Christian than anyone alive, what then can we point to and say "*God's glory*" in His life? It's not money, it's not success, at one point the majority of His followers turned against Him (**John 6:53-66**). To the physical eye, He was the lowest, and that is why the Samaritan woman reviled Him as she did.

Let us examine this more closely. **Matthew 5:19** reads,

"Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven"

Taking from this verse, you must first put into action before you can offer to others; the word of God is not spoken, it is given. If it is alive in your life, then, life is what you will give. Consider this; say you were holding a grudge against someone; someone betrayed me and I came to you asking for help. Now we all know that the bible teaches us to forgive. I come to you and you to tell me how **Luke 6** tells us to forgive and bless those that persecute us. That's all good and everything, I mean, the word of God says so after all. But there's only one problem with that; you are holding a grudge against someone, which means you are a slave to unforgiveness. Though you are advising me to forgive, because you are possessed with unforgiveness, unforgiveness is what you are possessing me with. It is not what we say, but what we do that teaches; our actions are who we really are.

I might walk away thinking I need to forgive and probably *do* forgive my persecutor. However, it may not last for very long because my forgiveness was of the flesh and not of the spirit. Anything that is not from God will never stand the test of time. I will forgive him, but the next time he makes a mistake, the anger will fester up and get worse, all because I was never delivered from that spirit of unforgiveness. Look at yourself, look at how you recall their past mistakes every time they make a mistake. That is because you never truly forgave them.

Yes, you are preaching the word of God, but what are you giving them? God is spirit, and those who worship Him should do so in spirit and in truth. Faith acts now. The gift of faith is by far one of the most beautiful gifts given to us by God. **Hebrews 11** tells us that, by faith, God created everything out of nothing. Faith has nothing to do with your situation, it has nothing to do with what you think is possible and what you think is not possible. Understand this, as a Christian, through faith you have been given the power of God; power with no limitations, it is only limited by your belief, or rather, disbelief.

Now ask yourself why your troubles are so persistent and why it takes so long for them to go away despite all of your prayers.

"But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

James 1:6-8

Sin is weakening your faith; disobedience is weakening your faith. Consider your surroundings. Despite Christians' continuous prayers, the world is still chaotic. If anything, things are getting worse. What is even more frightening, you believe I am talking about what the naked eye can see. Many of the problems we have today are because our faith is based on what we can see; we believe in what we see rather than what God says. The doctor diagnoses you with a fatal illness, and you begin to fear and panic, you check your bank balance to see if you can afford treatment. You look for help from friends and family, when all else fails, God is your last option; because He was never a priority in your life.

Challenges expose the true nature of our relationship with God. The power and authority we have over our situations are dependent and equivalent to the relationship we have with God. The more we struggle, the further away we are from God. How close are you to God? Are your troubles shaking you or are they bringing you closer to God? God created everything from nothing (**Hebrews 11**). Faith created all things despite its surroundings, faith created life despite there being no sign of life. Jesus was able to endure the cross because His heart was focused on the glory that was to come (**Hebrews 12:2**). It was never about coming out of that trouble you are in, no. It has always been about receiving the strength and power to stand firm in times of adversity. (**1 Corinthians 10:13**)

Challenges are the flames that purify us. Challenges mature us, and strengthen us; challenges prepare us for the blessings that God has in store for us. When Jesus' disciples asked Him why that man was born blind (**John 9**), In response, He told them that it was so that God's name may be glorified through that man. Examine your life; are your struggles drawing you closer to God or dragging you away from Him? Are you rejoicing in times of persecution, or are you complaining, worried, pointing fingers, and blaming others for your misfortunes?

One of the biggest mistakes we make as Christians is that we are solution focused. We tend to forget that the journey is more important than the destination. The lessons you learn when in trials and tribulations are more important than coming out of those trials and tribulations. Those lessons will aid you in the trials and tribulations that are to come. Every challenge comes with its own teachings, do not rush to come out, face that challenge, when the time is right, God will remember you, and you will come out stronger than you were.

The Bible teaches us that Jesus was poor so that we, through His poverty, can be rich (**2 Corinthians 8:9**). I believe *that* verse exposes the true nature of today's Christianity; it separates true Christians from false Christians. I used to believe that this verse was referring to prosperity, financial or physical gain, if you may. But taking a closer look at the verse, it says, "*...though He was rich,*". I find it very

interesting how apostle Paul says this with such boldness and confidence knowing very well that Jesus, all the way from His birth to His crucifixion, was never affluent, he never had any physical gain to speak of.

Furthermore, **Matthew 6:19-21** reads,

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

So, then, what are these riches that Jesus speaks of? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, and forgiveness (**Galatians 5:22-23**). These are the fruits of a pure heart. A pure heart is a heart that is ready for the Holy Spirit, a pure heart is a heart that is ready to take on God’s assignment. All the money in the world can never afford you these fruits; for to have them is to be the most successful person in the world. No car, job, house, marriage, money, or success will ever be enough to afford you any of these divine fruits. Only through the Holy Spirit are they received. These days, Christians are crying for jobs, marriages, businesses, cars, houses, healing, and all manner of material possessions. And yet the one thing you’ll never hear them crying for is salvation. It is as though we seek more comfort in this world than we do eternal life. We are desperate for what Satan can attack while rejecting what Satan cannot attack.

People undermine you; God blesses you with a new car, and to show that you have not forgiven them, you are still holding a grudge against them, you want them to see you driving your new car, you want them to respect you as an individual, you want to get back at them. But does God respect you, how does God see you as an individual? Are you in line with His word or lost in your fleshly desires?

If I were to ask you how sure are you about your salvation, what would your response be? If you are honest with yourself, you will know that you are not sure of your salvation. You are one hundred percent sure that you need money, that you need a car, that your business is struggling, and that you and your spouse are constantly arguing; truth is, you are surer of what Satan is doing in your life than you are of your relationship with God. My fellow Christian, do not be fooled; reading the Bible does not make you a Christian, going to church does not make you a Christian, and kneeling and praying to God does not make you a Christian. Only those who read the word of God with understanding, commit it into their hearts, and put it into action shall manifest themselves as friends of God, as true Christians.

“In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.”

1 John 3:10

It is impossible to do what is written in the Bible without the Holy Spirit helping you along. The word of God without the spirit of God is powerless (Acts 19:13-16). Faith acts now. Jesus said in **Matthew 17:20**,

"for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; nothing will be impossible for you."

So then, what kind of mountain are you up against? Is it sickness, joblessness, marital problems, a struggling business, rebellious children, or financial challenges? Whatever your case may be, I've got news for you. That is not your mountain; in fact, your troubles are merely tools to help you overcome your mountain. If your mountain *is* what you can see with your fleshly eyes, then you, my friend, are in big trouble.

Your mountain is unforgiveness, hatred, offense, lack of patience, undermining people, criticizing people, gossip, jealousy, bitterness, laziness, fleshly desires, disobedience, lust, the love of money, doubt, fear, worry, and many others such as these. If you could move all these mountains out of your way, your journey will be that much easier, nothing will be impossible for you. When a challenge comes, you will rejoice, because you know that God is faithful. A blessing has two things in it; receiving it and maintaining it. If God has not given it to you yet, it means you are not ready for it—that is, if you receive that blessing before time, it will most likely destroy you. God loves you too much, He does not want to lose you to the world.

You want a promotion and yet you are holding grudges against your colleagues; what kind of a leader will you be with such a heart? It means you will not control your blessing, but your blessing will control you. And if that happens, you are headed for destruction. God is not withholding your blessings because He does not love you, no! He is withholding them because He loves you and does not want to see calamity fall upon you. Many Christians walk on this earth unaware that Satan has his own bag of blessings (we'll delve more into that in the next chapter). Let me ask you this: how do you know that what you have received came from God?

Faith acts now. There is a huge difference between faith and risk. Faith knows it will succeed, *risk* is sure of nothing, and it does not believe in success. Everything that comes from God is permanent, it can withstand the test of time. It did not originate from God if it did not endure. If God is not involved, it will not be able to stand the test of time. It might take a week, a month, a year, or even decades; the one thing you can be sure of is that Satan has succeeded in delaying your life. How is your relationship with God? Is the line of communication open, or do you just pray and jump into it hoping that God will give you success?

Yes, you speak to Him, but does He speak to you, and do you listen? In everything that you do, involve God; that is the only way it will succeed (**Psalms 127:1**).

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

1 John 4:1

How do we test the spirits? With your Bible. Do not undermine anything, it is the little things, the things we most often ignore that are the most dangerous.

Everything is rooted in something. Whether it be a job, marriage, or a new business idea; whatever it may be, no matter how small it is, do not undermine the impact it might have on your life. Pray, and seek the face of God, He will guide you in the right direction. We live in a time where hundreds of people apply for the same job post, and yet, only one of them will get that job; a faithless generation—we live in a time where faith is just a waste of time for people. Desperation is pushing people into situations that will change the direction of their lives and thus pull them away from God’s will.

Satan knows what you are desperate for, and he will use it to torture you, he is ready to give it to you. In everything that comes your way, pray and ask God if it is yours or not. It matters not how good it looks, even if it seems like it is the solution to all your problems or however good it may feel; be very careful, we are living in a very dangerous time. Keep the faith, we are at war and the enemy will never fight fair.

“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.”

Matthew 10:34

PREPARE FOR WAR

Indeed, we are at war. However, our greatest threat may not necessarily be the enemy, rather, we are fighting the wrong battles. When you are engaged in the wrong battles, you cannot win the war; It simply means that the enemy has succeeded in distracting and misdirecting your attention from what will give you life, from what will give you victory to what will give the enemy dominion over your life. We honour that which is useless and destroys us, while we reject life and continue to fall prey to our desperation for destructive things. Why does the truth offend you? Because sin is your reality. Why are you offended when someone does something that goes against your beliefs? When someone does you wrong, what is it exactly that offends you in that?

"Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated? No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren!"

1 Corinthians 6:7-8

You are not angry because they did you wrong, you are angry because you yourself are capable of the same thing, you understand sin more than forgiveness and that is why you know exactly what it is they have done to you and the impact it will have on you. Your heart is just as filthy. That is why the Bible encourages us to forgive, regardless of the magnitude or degree of their wrong doing. The wrong they do to you is not where your anger comes from. All they did was simply expose the nature of your heart, they just exposed what was already there.

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

Luke 23:34

Jesus forgave His murderer, and you are holding a grudge against someone who said something you do not like. Petty squabbles are the nature of your Christianity, and you want me to believe you are walking with God? You are a hypocrite! Do you not know that you will answer for all your actions? But how can you be convinced when unbelief is the root of your Christianity? Your lack of belief and your doubts have no bearing on the truth. He is God alone.

Our battle is of the spirit, and not of the flesh (**Ephesians 6:12**). Our battle is against the demonic forces that torment our fellow brothers and sisters, and *not* our fellow brothers and sisters

themselves. As soon as you confessed Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you declared war against the kingdom of darkness. Satan detests you just as much as he detests Jesus. And, as such, he will try just about anything and use just about anything he can to destroy you.

Are you fighting the right battles or are you falling short in this war? What kind of weapons are you using? Are they effective? The most powerful weapon we have been blessed with as Christians is love. There is nothing more powerful than love in this world. Love created all things, love sustains us every day, and love sacrificed itself on the cross so that me and you can be free. As natural human beings, we do not know how to love, we are incapable of love; we are only vessels of love. We go to Jesus, and He anoints us with love.

Paul said, “I fought the good fight,”; Paul knew that the secret to a lasting victory was in *all* goodness. Having been an enemy of Jesus Christ, upon his deliverance, having been undeservedly forgiven of all sins, he then witnessed the power of His love himself. He could then conclude, with all certainty, that love conquers all things. **1 Corinthians 13:9-10** says, ...

“For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.”

All things that come from God are eternal. By this, we understand that in everything we do, if it is not done with love, it will not stand the test of time. We, as human beings, are incapable of perfection, all that we do is lacking in completion. But when the love of God is inserted into the equation, imperfection is done away and perfection takes its place. That is why, in all that we do, whether it be prophesying, whether it be preaching, or praying for God’s people; the most important thing is the motive (**Proverbs 21:2**). What is it that is pushing you? What is the spirit behind your giving, your prayers, you’re standing in front of a crowd to preach the word of God? what is your motive?

As Christians (or people in general, regardless of their faith.), our actions are covered by our motives; the power and effect our actions have in our lives and other people’s lives are determined by our motives. The size of our giving is inconsequential, it matters not. Because no matter how little what you are giving is, if your motive is in line with the Word of God—your motive covers your giving and increases it. Ask the poor widow (**Luke 12:41-44**), whose two coins were covered by her motive. It is not what you give, but how you give.

Jesus had only five loaves of bread to feed a crowd of five thousand people; but because His motive was pure, it covered the five loaves of bread and God increased on it. It is not that what you are giving is little, but that your unbelief is limiting your giving. Hatred, anger, unforgiveness, jealousy, and bitterness are limiting your giving.

It is in this area that Satan is most potent in weakening Christians. In the gospel of today, the Holy Spirit has been limited to just a construct of mental ascension. The worshiping of God has been watered down to human wisdom. Yes, you give, but your giving was only a temporary solution, tomorrow it is back to the same problem. Which God is that one? Every solution that comes from God is permanent; if it does not last, then it is not from God. Is your giving spiritual or physical? If God is

indeed involved, a loaf of bread will be powerful enough to turn a poor man into a wealthy somebody. Or are you under the false impression that education is the key to success?

“And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.”

Deuteronomy 8:18

So, what can we say about this? What spirit is behind your giving? The assumption of God being with you just because you are doing what people consider to be good is not only delusional but rather dangerous, to the point of life and death. That advice you are giving, that prayer you are offering, that helping hand, that food, those clothes or money; is it spiritual or is it physical?

“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit.”

Zechariah 4:6

As Christians, we are continually assembling, but are we truly gathering in the name of Jesus Christ, or are we just led by our feelings and emotions and this indoctrination of, *“that is what Christians do”*? What does it mean to gather in the name of Jesus (**Matthew 18:20**)? Yes, we gather physically, but are we gathered in spirit? A group of unrelated individuals gathering in a building intended for the worshiping of God does not mean they’re gathered in His name.

“Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honour Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward me is taught by the commandment of men.”

Isaiah 29:13

To gather in His name is to be one in heart—that is, with hearts that are full of forgiveness. What good is it that you gather in one place to worship God, and yet some of you are holding grudges, some are slaves to fleshly desires, some are not on speaking terms with their neighbors, and some are in it to satisfy their selfish ambition? In what world would such uncleanness be appealing to God? God cannot be tempted by sin. And yet you still wonder why your prayers are not being answered. All the good in the world will never be enough substitute for an unclean heart. It is impossible to approach

God with a heart full of unforgiveness, a self-seeking heart full of bitterness, anger, jealousy, and offense.

Every good thing given to us by God is a result of His forgiveness—blessings are received through the forgiveness of our sins. When God blesses you, it is a sign that God has forgiven you your sins; it is not because you deserve it, no. But it is that God's love endures. Every waking day you sin, literally standing against God as His enemy. And yet, every waking day you expect to receive from Him and blame Him when nothing comes your way. Can you be any more conceited?

The Holy Spirit uses three very powerful weapons: peace, joy, and love. These three are the enemy of unforgiveness. You cannot hold offense and hope to have peace. You cannot hold a grudge and hope to know joy. Where there is unforgiveness, there is no love. Where there is unforgiveness, there can only be pain. Anger is a very powerful tool in the hands of Satan; it is a dream killer, a family destroyer, a marriage destroyer, and the ender of friendships.

1 John 2:15 reads, ...

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him.”

The love of the material has blinded many to the truth of this world. Anger, selfish ambition, hatred, jealousy, bitterness, unforgiveness, offense, doubt, worry, fear, and sinful desires; all these are rooted in the love of this world. A Christian who is full of God's love forgives no matter the magnitude of the offense. Not to say you will never be offended, or you will never get angry, but that if indeed you walk with God, you will never allow the sun to go down without you forgiving them (**Ephesians 4:26**). You refuse to forgive them because you love this world, and the love of the Father is not with you. For it is in the love of the Father that we find the strength to forgive those who wrong us. God's love is the manifestation of patience, the manifestation of forgiveness; God's love purifies our hearts for the battle that is to come.

You may imagine the world is in bad shape now: killings, hunger, poverty, corruption, rape, kidnappings, country against country, and economic meltdown. Unfortunately, this is only the beginning. A time is coming when murder will not be considered a crime, a time when murder will become commonplace. The love of the world has blinded many to the truth of what is happening—but, nothing stays hidden forever; all shall come to light. The battles of today are a preparation for the battles of tomorrow. It is by God's grace that we are still standing.

The book of **1 John** continues to say,

“For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

1 John 2:16-17

If God is not the beginning of that relationship, the beginning of that marriage, the beginning of that business, the beginning of whatever else you are doing or planning to do, then you, my friend, have opened the door for trouble. All Satan needs to do is tempt you with what you desire the most; he knows that at the end of that wrong relationship, you will be left a bitter and angry person. And because of that, he now has access to destroy your blessings. Never mind what you may have now, I am referring to the blessings that have not yet manifested in the flesh, that are still idling in the spirit. Your troubles are not because God does not love you, they are the result of your sins. Do not be fooled, the bill always comes due.

Yes, we are at war, but which war are you fighting; the fleshly war or the spiritual war? When you choose to harbor offense, in whose name are you standing? That is why when trouble comes, the first thing you do is look at your bank balance rather than going to God—because your hope is not in God, your hope lies in the same material that placed you in that same situation. Do you believe money will get you out of that situation? What placed you in that situation in the first place? Do you think your wife or husband will be able to resolve those troubles you guys are facing? Or did you wake up one morning and decide that you're going to get yourself into trouble that will be tough to resolve? Seeing as how much you fear challenges, I suppose that would be a no, right?

But then, where did that challenge come from? One thing you can be sure of, it has been building up behind the scenes for some time now. With every sin you commit, tightening up its grip on your life until it has grown to a point where it explodes and manifests itself in the physical. You can't fight poverty with money, doctors cannot heal, and what you see with your fleshly eyes will never provide a secure future. Just as **1 John 2** tells us, nothing in this world lasts, but only that which comes from God lasts. The poor are dying, the middle-class folk are dying, and the rich are dying; what safe place is there on this earth? Whether rich or poor, when death has come for you, only God can save you.

But then, how *do* you face your challenges? For us as Christians, and human beings in general, growth is found in pain. Abraham found growth in sacrificing his only beloved son, Job found growth in the pain of losing all his children and riches, and Christianity found growth in the pain of Jesus' crucifixion. Those that move forward in life are those who see pain for what it truly is—a preparation. Joseph went from slave to prisoner, to second in command. Job went from losing all that he had to receiving double what he lost. Moses went from being a fugitive to being the greatest prophet known to man. Paul went from being a blind man to being one of the most significant preachers of the Word of God.

Breakthrough comes at a cost. What are you going through, are you facing it head-on or are you searching for ways to come out? Why is it so difficult for you to just wait for God? You of little faith! A little sickness you panic and run to the doctor. The doctor gives you a piece of paper and now you fear for your life. God says you are healed, the doctor says you are sick, but you choose to believe the doctor over God. Why is that? Your faith is the result of the kind of life you are living. Apostle Paul prided himself in fighting the good fight (**2 Timothy 4:7**), in fighting the only fight with a guaranteed victory. Righteousness is the crown that ensures our sonship with God.

"Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, but righteousness delivers from death."

Proverbs 10:2

What kind of death do you want God to deliver you from? Are you having marital problems, are you having financial troubles, are you fighting with your neighbor, are you holding grudges against your colleagues, or are you having sleepless nights brought on by nightmares? Whatever your case, righteousness is the best medicine. Do not be fooled, whatever troubles that you are going through—you are the cause; it was through your sins that Satan was able to gain access into your life.

Sin is the tool that allows Satan to steal our blessings, destroy our future, and push us away from our destiny's path. Remember, it is our future that Satan fears the most; not our past or present. Why? Because the future is unknown. We all love God's protection; we all seek it. Maybe not so diligently at times, but we seek it none the less. **Job 24:23** reads,

*"He gives them security, and they rely on it;
Yet His eyes are on their ways."*

This verse makes it very clear that you going to church will not guarantee you protection, praying fervently will not guarantee you protection, or reading the Bible will not guarantee you protection; rather, reading the Word of God with understanding—that is, reading it and putting it into action is the only safe bet we have against the forces of darkness. It is only when we live a righteous life that our protection is guaranteed.

*"Blessings are on the head of the
righteous..."*

Proverbs 10:6

What have you been praying for? What, in your opinion, would you consider to be a blessing? A car, marriage, money, a job, a house, healing, or food maybe? You are not wrong; yes, all these are blessings. But the real question is: why do we limit God's blessings to what this world can offer? It has come to a point where Christians love blessings more than challenges, thus creating the sort of environment that we see today; a world where fear and worry are heavily oppressing the people of God. As Christians, we grow more in challenges, God allows challenges so that He can strengthen us and prepare us for what is to come.

Challenges expose the true nature of our relationship with God, or rather, the lack thereof. Fear, doubt, worry, sadness, depression, pain; none of these things come from God—in fact, they only serve to delay our lives. That is why, when challenges come, they expose all this uncleanness and reveal our weaknesses. A little financial trouble, and you start panicking. Why? In the public eye, you are

Christian number one, but let a small challenge come, then you will know who you truly are. When things are going fine you are everywhere, standing tall as though you own this world. When things go wrong, you go into hiding, keeping a low profile. A hypocrite of a Christian!

The only thing you accomplished was to make the public aware of your vulnerability. Strength is not a result of achievement. Your success is not a marker of strength, your possessions are not a marker of strength. You will know that you are strong when you begin to acknowledge your weakness. That is why Paul found joy in his weaknesses. When you are weak, then you are strong **(2 Corinthians 12:10)**. When you are weak, God becomes your strength. Your growth as a Christian is the direct result of you acknowledging your weaknesses; it is you acknowledging your anger, your prideful ways, your grudges, your selfish ambitions, your fears, and your doubts.

You cannot fight an enemy you do not know. That is why all those who give food to the hungry know the pain of hunger. If you do not know it, then your giving will not be in truth. That is why, as Christians, pain is our friend, because the troubles we face equip us with the right tools to fight the good fight.

“...and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?”

James 2:16

Prayer means action! What good is it for me to pray for your finances and yet do nothing about it? If indeed, my prayer is a prayer of truth, if indeed I am praying in truth and spirit, it will be followed by actions. What I do in public reveals my prayers in private. And yet, just as the poor widow would attest **(Luke 21:1-4)**, it is not what you give, but how you give that attracts God. God is drawn in by the heart of the giver, not the gift itself. It is not necessarily what you are giving that will make all the difference, but the spirit behind what you are giving is what will set them free.

You can give bread to a hungry man, but what about tomorrow, what will happen to them when you are no longer able to give them bread? Yes, you did do what the Bible commands us to do, and yet, your giving only went so far as to give them a solution for today, but not for tomorrow. Your giving, however little it may seem, must carry them into their breakthrough. If God is truly involved in your giving, a loaf of bread has the power to turn a homeless person into one of the wealthiest people in the world. But because of doubt, because of worry, because of sin we are where we are today; believing in fleshly things, believing in what we can see with our physical eyes rather than believing in God's power. You'd much rather give away old clothes instead of buying them new ones. Why? Because you do not believe that God will provide for you. You do not want these clothes; you want new ones. So now you are dumping your old unwanted stuff on them. What kind of spirit is that one? How would you describe cursing other people?

The Bible teaches us that anything and everything that comes from God is permanent (Psalm 136:1-9). Why then, when following the word of God, do our solutions, our giving, and our prayers only go so far? Look at the state of the world as it is; if God is truly *that* powerful, why is the state of the world

worsening despite our fervent prayers? Are we really praying? The Bible teaches us that the Holy Spirit prays for us in groanings that cannot be expressed in words (**Romans 8:26**). One can conclude that the words we utter when we pray do not constitute nor form the body of prayer. But then, what is prayer?

“And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God’s own will.”

Romans 8:27 (NLT Bible)

The most effective prayer is the one that is prayed according to God’s will. This emphasizes having a strong relationship with God. You may be facing financial difficulties and want to pray and ask God for a financial breakthrough. But you may find that God wants you to ask for forgiveness because a repentance prayer is what will give you your financial breakthrough. You may be praying for strength during a very difficult time when all God wants you to do is to just thank Him and your solution will come. Ask apostle Paul and Silas (**Acts 16**); rather than asking God to free them from their imprisonment, because they were one with the Spirit of God, they prayed according to God’s will.

You, on the other hand, pray according to your situation, led by the flesh rather than the Spirit, and that is why you are stuck in that situation. How long have you been praying for a way out and yet you are still stuck in that situation? Even when your solution comes it never lasts, you go back to that same situation because your relationship with God is non-existent. God is Spirit, and where there is God there is freedom (2 Corinthians 3:17).

It is not necessarily what you are giving, more precisely, the size of it that matters, but rather the motive behind it—that is, the spirit behind it (Proverbs 21:1). How are you giving? Where are you giving? Why are you giving? When your giving is in line with the word of God, no matter how little it may be, it is enough to save a life. A loaf of bread in the hands of a Christian is powerful enough to alter the course of a person’s life forever. But why do we not know this, why do we not understand this? Why do we believe a grocery worth a thousand is what they need when Jesus Himself only needed five loaves and two fish to feed a crowd of 5000 people (**Matthew 14:13-21**)? Mind you, even in that situation Jesus did not ask for a way out, but instead gave thanks, which was a prayer that was offered according to the will of God.

In any case, we are living in very dangerous times, you’d be fooling yourself if you thought you are not a victim of generational curses. The troublesome situations we are facing in our lives today are brought on by demons. There is nothing negative in this world that ever came from God. Let’s take the grandest example of them all, Sodom & Gomorrah. Punishment comes when God removes His hand of protection. Sometimes I wonder why Christians are so ignorant of the truth. Those same devil worshippers who are up in the middle of the night performing their rituals trying to possess you with the spirit of death did not wake this morning because their master has the power to give life, no. They

woke up because the hand of protection is still upon them, maybe not on all sides, but enough that life is still with them.

When God gives, He gives with love, because He knows that without love it will never last (**1 Corinthians 13:13**). For them to see another day means God chose to love them. So then, who am I to do otherwise? Your true nature will not be revealed when you are with your fellow Christian brothers and sisters, but when you are with those who do not share the same faith as you. When a non-believer does something that stands against your Bible, that is when your hatred is exposed. Them simply walking past you is enough for you to hate them. That hatred, that anger, that unforgiveness is the key that opens the door to your life for all those troubles you are facing today.

A person may be suffering from hunger, but in all truth, their solution might not be food, but instead deliverance from that demon that is oppressing them. With that said, it is not the food that you give them that delivers them, but it is the spirit behind the food that will set them free. Therefore, the size of it is of no consequence. A great prophet of God once said to me, and I'm paraphrasing here, *"The size of what you give is of no consequence, because no matter how small it is if it is given with love, the love behind it will cover it and multiply it."* I get giving with love, giving with a cheerful heart and all, but what did he mean when he said *multiply*?

This is now where we separate religion from the Spirit; Many times, when people give money, they anticipate receiving more money from God. That is practical human wisdom at its best (or worst, depending on how you look at it). God is spirit; therefore, all that God is, and all that God gives is spirit. What you see with the naked eye is not the actual blessing, but the result of the real blessing which was given in spirit. You can give a pair of shoes to a young kid who is struggling with their studies, and boom, suddenly they're excelling in their studies. A small bottle of water given with love can be enough to change the fortunes of a struggling business. You walking into a room is enough to set people free from chains of bondage. It is the Spirit that gives life, human effort accomplishes nothing (**John 6:63**).

Your heart is the contact point of communication with God. What you are capable of is dependent upon your belief, and the size of your faith. You don't need to be a pastor, prophet, or apostle to perform miracles, no. All you need is a believing heart, a pure heart. This brings us back to weaknesses; our troubles are the result of our weaknesses. Your business is not struggling because of the economy, it is struggling because of your unforgiveness, it is struggling because of your holding on to grudges. That is enmity against God. How then, can you expect to walk with God with a heart full of unforgiveness? What is your weakness? Is it anger, laziness, jealousy, bitterness, lack of patience, trusting people too much? Whatever it may be, no one else is to blame but yourself; your troubles are your own fault, your troubles are the result of your own sins.

But what is freedom? Is it a job with a high paying salary? Is it a fridge full of food? Is it a fancy car or is it climbing down a double-story mansion? We have all been led to believe that haven't we? You see these rich people and think they are blessed not knowing that earthly riches do not necessarily mean God's grace is abounding. Remember, Satan has his own bag of blessings. Anything you see with the naked eye or touch with your own hands, the devil is capable of blessing you with it in abundance. Real freedom is knowing God; freedom is having God in your heart. One may have all the money in the world, and yet, still have no peace. What good are all these so-called "*blessings*" if you do not have peace of heart?

"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Matthew 16:26

I believe that at the core of every human being is a desire for peace. The method by which we seek that peace is the source of our suffering. We all live according to our beliefs; what you believe is translated into your actions. You drink alcohol because you believe it will give you peace. Some put their hopes on money, some on relationships, and many other things that can easily perish. People believe in the things that Satan can easily use to torment them. But the one thing that Satan is unable to use against them, which is the Holy Spirit, they do not believe in it because they cannot see nor touch it with their bare hands. But if you ask Christians today what idolization is, they'll tell you that it is the worshiping of idols/statues. Why? Because to them the Bible is just a collection of historical events, it is just literature, a philosophy.

What is it that you want, and how do you want it? Only God can give true peace (**Isaiah 26:3**). Your fleshly desires are creating an opportunity for Satan to torture you without you even knowing it. In everything that you have ever received, whether it be a car, job, marriage, money, or whatever fleshly blessing; how many of them can you confidently say they were given to you by God? What proof do you have that your "*blessing*" came from God? Because it's money? Because it's a job? Is that the only proof you have, the item itself? It coming at a time when you need it the most does not mean it came from God. It could mean the devil took advantage of your desperation, and with a sleight of hand, gave you that job you oh so very much needed. Yeah, sure it's in a different location from the one God had in mind for you, yeah sure you're working under a boss who treats you like trash and you are constantly at odds with your colleagues. Yeah, sure you've been stuck in the same position for years when younger, less experienced colleagues are getting promoted. How about that pay raise, still fighting for it? You want to tell me that God blessed you with that job even though you can't think of a single positive thing to say about it? Must be nice being you.

Listen, I have been a victim of ignorance for a very long time. Taking a job because of desperation, going into relationships because of loneliness. On the outside, yes, they are enticing; the job pays well, that potential partner checks all the boxes, the car is affordable or the timing is just perfect. But what is God saying about it? Not your pastor or friend, no. What is God saying about it? Is it in line with God's will or is there a very dangerous under-current that's invisible to the naked eye?

Did He confirm to you that it is coming from Him, or because of this indoctrination of believing that everything "good" comes from God, you've convinced yourself that it came from God? I repeat. Satan has his own bag of blessings; marriages, money, car, jobs, success, houses, friends, businesses, and a whole number of things. How do you know if a blessing comes from God? Simple; it will come with peace, and the bonus of *it* being permanent. If it does not give you peace of heart, then it is not from God. If it does not last, then it is not from God. It is not the size or magnitude of it that will give you

peace, but it is the Spirit of God that is behind it. And please remember this; anything that leads to sin does not come from God. Therefore, if it leads you to sin, then it did not come from God.

How many failed relationships have you been in, how many friends have you lost, how many failed businesses have you had, and how many jobs have you lost or left? It is because God was not involved. Be very careful, we are living in perilous times. We are living in a time where the enemy comes in the form of what you need the most. The only question is; where is your heart; is it on what you need or is it on Jesus? If your heart is in this world, then you are an easy target for the kingdom of darkness. But if your heart is where Jesus is, then the kingdom of darkness can't torment you. Challenges will come, but they will never destroy you; your name will be victory.

Understand this; times might have changed, but everything remains the same in spirit, just as they were in the times of old. All the amazing things that happened in the Old Testament are still happening today, but in a different way of course. In the spirit, it is the same, but the manifestation in the physical may be slightly different. Consider Daniel in the den of lions; look at how Christianity is being rejected by our leaders, how it is being oppressed by our leaders. No nation in the world has escaped this tragedy. Please don't misunderstand me; I am in no way condoning anger towards our leaders, that happens to be God's job. The first thing Daniel did when the king called out to him in the den of lions was to bless the king, Daniel chose love over hatred. I am not in any way trying to justify that anger you have for your leaders.

Your heart is the contact point, your greatest weapon; your heart is your true self. It is impossible to give what you do not have. If your heart is full of anger, offense, or hatred; everything you touch will be poisoned, everything you own is poisoned. Ask the woman who had been suffering for twelve years from hemorrhages (**Luke 8:43-48**), and was instantly healed the moment she touched Jesus' garment. Jesus' heart was possessed with the Holy Spirit. But if your heart is possessed with demons, you will focus on people's mistakes rather than their strengths, you will criticize rather than build, you will judge rather than give a helping hand; you will only succeed in isolating yourself and destroying your blessings.

When you hold offense, you destroy your relationship with God. True forgiveness is actions, not words. God forgave us and sacrificed His only son as a mark of His forgiveness for us. You don't have to wait for someone to apologize before you can forgive them. Even if someone asks for your forgiveness, you will never be able to forgive them if you can't let go of the past without them making an effort to make amends. I'm not saying they should not try to make amends. In fact, I encourage it. But on your part, your forgiveness should not be dependent on their actions, because the Bible teaches us that love counts no wrong. Your forgiveness is for the sake of yours and their peace of heart. Love is not self-seeking (**1 Corinthians 13:4-6**).

If your forgiveness is not from the heart, the next time they make a mistake will rile up that old anger because you never truly forgave them. Forgiveness is not a decision; forgiveness is a spirit from God. And a heart that is filled with rage and unforgiveness will never hold that which is from God. That is why even when you forgive them your forgiveness never lasts because it never came from God. You are too much of yourself, "*they hurt me, they did this to me.*" They tortured and killed Jesus, and yet, He chose to forgive them, because He knew who His father was, He knew the secret of salvation. You serve a God you do not know, and that is why you are in it for yourself. You can give yourself the title

of Christian, but there is no Christian who is a Christian without love. **Ephesians 2:8-9** teaches us this principle; the principle of selflessness, the principle of love.

You cannot forgive without love (1 John 4:16). Where there is love, there is God, where there is God, there is freedom. Forgiveness is a spirit from God; it is impossible to forgive without this blessing. As Christians, our job is to be channels of hope where there is hopelessness, channels of joy where there is pain, channels of breakthrough where there is stagnation and channels of love where there is hatred. Love counts no wrong (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). When you have the capacity to forgive and love, you will know that God is with you. **(1 John 4:8)**. Love is not love until it is given away, because love does not seek its own, but looks around to see where it is needed.

We did not send ourselves into this world; we were sent. This battle has been going on long before you were born, and it will continue to go on long after you have passed on. This battle is older than you and greater than you. There are no heroes here; only servants. My fellow Christians, let us fight the good fight, and only then will God be with us.

KNOW WHO YOU ARE

We are not of this world; we are spiritual beings in a physical body learning to live in a physical world. What we are is more than we can ever imagine; we are fearfully, and wonderfully made (**Psalm 139:14**). With that said, which life are you living? Is it the life *you* want, or the life that God had planned for you? As Christians, or humans in general, we are not what we say we are, but what we do. Our actions are the result of our beliefs—that is, what is in our hearts. Whether it be anger, jealousy, bitterness, unforgiveness, love, unity, or patience; whatever it may be, it will reveal itself in everything you do, not what you say.

Our suffering is not caused by external forces, but it is fuelled by us not knowing who we are. Where there is no vision, people perish (**Proverbs 29:18**). If you do not know who you are, you will not know where you are going, and if you do not know where you are going, you will take anything that comes your way. To you, it may seem of no consequence, but the enemy will see it as a great opportunity. The fact is, it is not money that you need, it is not a job that you need, a promotion, a partner, a car, or whatever that you may think you need; all of these you already have. The question is; what is stealing all your blessings from you before they can manifest in the physical?

Before anything manifests in the physical, it is the heart that first receives it. What then shall we say about the heart? A believer's heart needs to meet a certain condition for it to be able to receive and manifest what it has been blessed with. And what condition is that? A pure heart is a heart that is ready to receive; a forgiving heart is a receiving heart. Imagine your heart is like a runway, and there is a jumbo jet carrying your blessings that wants to land with them. And yet, it is unable to; because uncleanness such as unforgiveness, anger, offense, bitterness, jealousy, and laziness are like an impenetrable high wall of steel that prevents us from receiving our blessings. Let the poor say I am blessed, let the lame say I am healed; for that is the power and authority that we have been blessed with, to command all that we need into existence.

What is preventing God from working more powerfully in our lives? Why are we suffering so much as God's children? We are fighting amongst ourselves, killing each other, all the while ignoring the real enemy; sin. Sin limits God's power in our lives, it possesses us with doubt, fear, worry, panic, pain, anger, unforgiveness, bitterness, and jealousy. Sin is a very dangerous cage of limitation; it confines us to darkness and delays the progress of our lives. Satan does not attack you directly; he attacks your faith through what you love the most. If it is money that you love, he knows that if he attacks your finances, you will lose hope, lament, complain, and blame others for your situation; by doing so he has achieved his goal of destroying your relationship with God. That is the devil's ultimate goal, to destroy our relationship with God

It wasn't an accident that someone stepped on your incredibly expensive shoe; demons know exactly what they are doing. Your children giving you sleepless nights while they're out till morning is not a rite of passage; demons know exactly what they are doing. That small ding on your car was not an accident; demons know exactly which buttons to push when they want to torture you. Because of your devotion to this world, the kingdom of darkness now has all the tools necessary to torture you.

The question is: Do *you* know what *you* are doing? At which point will it dawn on you that your life is not your own? When you're already dead maybe? Might probably be too late then, huh? Or maybe there's a bonus round where angels ask you trivia questions like, "*How long is the wind?*", and if you get it right you go straight into heaven. How sure are you that you're going to heaven when you die? I'm not talking about the assumption of going to heaven, I'm talking about knowing for a fact that you're going to heaven. Which, by the way, has nothing to do with going to church, believing there is a God, and praying every day. Things of the spirit do not operate as we think they do, they operate as they do, they operate as God wills.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways." Declares the Lord. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your Thoughts.'"

Isaiah 55:8-9

There are times when we use the Bible to justify our wrongdoing, to justify our sinful nature. The same way you married because of fleshly desires and now you're hoping God will strengthen you through this divorce. You're rude, obnoxious, and greedy, and yet you believe God will give you a breakthrough in your business. You undermine people and give special attention to those with high amounts of tithe and yet you believe that the Lord will be with you as a good leader of a ministry. This disgrace is made possible by how we read our Bibles; wrongly. But how will you know that you are reading your Bible the right way? When you read the Word of God, the first thing it must do is rebuke you; then you will know that you are reading the Word of God with understanding. For example; "*Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails,*" (**Proverbs 19:21**). Now you know why things just keep going sideways for you; they are your plans, not God's.

Look at all the people who died of terminal illness, look at all the people who died from car accidents, look at all the people who are addicted to drugs, look at all the people who are divorced; in which part of God's word does it tell us that all these tragedies we are facing today are God's plans? Look at all the hate, the unforgiveness; why do we believe that all these things come from God? My fellow Christians, God is not a dictator. There is only one way that God's plans for your life can come to fruition; **OBEDIENCE**. What protects us from the tragedies of this world is righteousness (**Proverbs 21:21**).

We live in a time where Christians believe that prosperity will give them peace; they want cars, they want money, they want high paying jobs, beautiful houses, a beautiful wife or handsome husband, a successful business, a degree in whatever, marriage or whatever else this world has to offer. Understand this; having all these desires is not wrong in any way, fact is, it delights God to bless you with all these things. Trouble comes when you put your hope in all these things, trouble comes when you love them more than you love God. You start a business not knowing whether it came from God or not, you go into a relationship not knowing whether it came from God or not telling us about love

when you know nothing about love. There is no surety in them; the only thing you can trust will never change or lose power is the Spirit of God.

In what verse is it written that demons are not capable of making a man fall in love with the wrong woman? I distinctly remember Samson & Delilah, and even heathens know of Jezebel. Ignorance is a very dangerous sin. What then, when your spouse disappoints you, when your business struggles, when your health starts deteriorating, when you lose your job, when that fame you've worked so hard for turns against you, when that car puts you in a car accident; why would you put your hope in something that has no surety of life, no surety of salvation? When you put your hopes in money, you then become an easy target for the kingdom of darkness, you provide the devil with an instrument of torture. The devil knows that if he wants to discourage you, all he needs to do is to just touch your finances. Satan knows that God cannot use a discouraged servant.

You believing that God's plans for your life will prevail will not make them prevail, but you obeying the word of God will—that is, reading your Bible with understanding (reading it with understanding means reading it and putting it into action), will guarantee God's plans prevail in your life. Yes, you go to church, you pray, and your pastor prays for you, but the greatest is love (**1 Corinthians 13:13**). What can we say about love? Apostle Paul said, *"I have fought the good fight..."* (**2 Timothy 4:7**); when you forgive, you are fighting the good fight, when you give to the needy you are fighting the good fight. When you chose love over everything else, you push God to bless you even more.

To fight the good fight is to be a weapon for God, to be the difference between life and death; to fight the good fight is to be a light in a very dark world. In a world where the word of God has been twisted to the point where lies are mistaken for the truth, where love is frowned upon and hatred is praised, where foolishness is wise and wisdom is stupidity; we need Christians who will stand for the truth, Christians who will fight the good fight. When you know who you are, you will know God. The Bible teaches us that we have been made in the likeness of God (**Genesis 1:27**). To be made in the image of God means to have His power and authority at hand. To have faith in God means to have unlimited power behind us (**Hebrews 11**). So then, why are we struggling? Why are you struggling? Do you not know whose you are?

Do not allow sin to blind you to the wonderful truth of who you are. The only fear a Christian is allowed to have is the fear of sin and nothing else.

PURPOSE

Everybody has a different idea of what peace is, individual concepts of what peace is. When I look at the body of Christ (**1 Corinthians 12:27**), What has always amazed me the most is the simple but very complicated fact that in all the people that are alive today, no two people are the same. You are a revelation, that is why there is no one else like you. This means that in you is a purpose that only you can fulfil. Inside your heart, is God's purpose, an assignment that only you are capable of fulfilling—that is how special you are. Billions of candidates walking this earth, and God chose you. Never undermine yourself, the measure of what God has placed in you, human wisdom is incapable of grasping the sheer scope of its magnitude. This is why, no matter the social standing, no matter their circumstance, you need to see all human beings as important.

Nonetheless, the vast majority of God's children fall short of the expectations that God has for them. The success of a person, I mean prosperity, does not necessarily mean that they are blessed or they are in line with the will of God, no! Jesus advised the young rich man to sell all his belongings and give to the poor (**Matthew 19:21**), that is if he wanted to be perfect. Jesus was revealing a very powerful secret to this young man, the secret of perfection. Nothing you possess, or how you appear, or your accomplishments make you perfect; the secret of perfection is in giving to the needy, it is in love.

If I say to you, *to him much is given, from him much is expected* (**Luke 12:48**); you're probably thinking those who are affluent, prosperous, or have a lot are required to share with those that have little or nothing, right? Well, you're not wrong, but you're not right either. Let me put it this way; In His time here on earth, much was expected from Jesus, and that is exactly what He gave. Mind you, He had no riches to speak of, in fact, He was poor all the way to the cross. If God is spirit, then why are we limiting what he gives to fleshly things? Love cannot be quantified; love has no shape or size. Giving begins in the heart; it is not what you give, but the spirit behind what you are giving that matters. If a poor widow can give more than several rich people, what then can we say about giving? Can we say it is limited to a select few who have the means or is it can anyone in any position give? If just about anyone who is in any position, whether affluent or poor, can give, then this throws the notion of *giving is for those who have*.

Purpose cannot be defined in simple human logic. For example: maybe God's purpose for my life is to write just this one book, and maybe it is meant to be read by ten people, and only seven of those will be impacted by it. Jesus needed only one person (**John 4**), one Samaritan woman to make a difference in thousands of people's lives. Jesus believed in little because He knew the power of little. Before Jesus fed the five thousand (**Matthew 14:13-21**) with five loaves of bread and two fish, rather than asking God for more, He gave thanks because He understood the power of little; Jesus understood the

assignment. It is not the physical impact that makes a difference, but rather, the spiritual impact that changes a situation. We live in a time where people believe that to be a pastor means to stand in front of a crowd and preach; they can never be further away from the truth. Those who truly preach the Word of God will demonstrate it by their deeds. They will first put it into action before they teach it to the people **(Matthew 5:19)**. You cannot give what you do not have. Do not be fooled by prosperity and think of them blessed by God. A church can have five thousand members and yet no Holy Spirit. If prosperity was anything to go by, then why not seek advice from rich non-believers?

To be a pastor is a gift, it does not mean you need to be one with the pulpit; to be a pastor is grace. A pastor's job is to redeem God's children for the forgiveness of their sins. Between a cleaner/genitor and the CEO of a big company, who would you say is key to the company's success? You're probably thinking of the CEO, right? But what if I told you that it was the cleaner who brought the Favor of success to the company, would you believe that? Because of the cleaners' prayers, asking God to have mercy upon the company and the workers, God remembers them and forgives them their sins.

"And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God."

Luke 16:15

Spiritual gifts do not operate as we think or want them to operate; we are blessed to bless others. It is only when we are obedient, when we follow God's instructions, we are able to live a life that transcends human logic—that is, to live a supernatural life. The Bible tells us of the five-fold ministry **(Ephesians 4:11)**; billions of people in the world and we are all perfectly divided into five spiritual groups, and yet, no two are the same. How many prophets do you think there are in the world, how many apostles, evangelists, or teachers of the word? The problem is, we have pastors who think of themselves as prophets, singers who think of themselves as worshipers, and teachers of the word who think of themselves as pastors; how can the church not be confused, how can the church not be destroyed with such people in the midst of it?

If you do not know God's purpose for your life, then you do not know who you are. If you do not know who you are, doubt will weigh you down, fear will cripple your spiritual life, worry will delay your life, and unforgiveness will fill your heart with pain. You cannot be a Christian and not know what God's plans are for your life; to know God's plans for your life is a sign that you have a personal relationship with Jesus. It took me a while for me to see what God had planned for my life, the many mistakes I made along the way, and the many wrong turns I took along the way, but God remained faithful. All the challenges I went through, and all the mistakes I made were necessary for me to be where I am today, for me to be sure of my future with God, and to be sure of God's purpose for my life.

Every single human being is unique in their own way, just as God's purpose for their lives is unique in its own way, not *your* way. The most important thing about God's purpose for your life is not

necessarily the purpose itself, but the process to prepare you for that purpose. Trials, temptations, persecution, challenges, difficulties, or adversities; all these are key to the fulfilment of God's purpose in your life. So why fear them? Every desire in our hearts that is in line with God's word, that is in line with God's purpose for our lives needs to be purified; and challenges are the best way to do exactly that. God uses difficulties to purify our hearts, teach us His word, and pressure us into total submission to His word.

Every challenge that you go through is tailor-made for you; our challenges are because of our desires. Whatever you desire that pleases God, your challenges are meant to prepare you for it, to strengthen you for it. If you desire marriage, your challenges will be specifically designed to teach you the word of God you will need to be able to face the challenges that come with being in a marriage. A Christian is a friend of challenges—never fear them, never run away from them, face them, and when you come out victorious, they will never come back again. But when you avoid your challenges, when you take shortcuts, you only succeed in postponing them. And when they come back the second time around, they will be worse than they were the first time.

One of the most feared challenges that I have seen in this world is the challenge of staying single—that is, waiting for God to bless you with a partner. From Genesis, all the way to Revelations the Bible only speaks of marriage. Unless of course I've been reading the wrong Bible all this time and God did say something about "dating". Not to confuse it with courtship; How can non-believers go about a certain way in finding a partner, and believers proceed in the same manner? Can't you see something is not right here?

Anything that cannot be found in the Bible did not come from God, it is in fact, sin. How many relationships have you been in? Those relationships never lasted because God was not involved. You were led by your fleshly desires and by doing so delayed God's progress in your life. What's so difficult about remaining single, praying, and waiting for God to bless you with a partner? When you avoid a challenge in such a manner, it will always come back, and when it does, it will bring a lot of pain with it. Look at the number of divorces; that relationship may last 20, 30 years, but eventually, it will crumble. Anything that does not begin with God can never stand the test of time.

What about money? The challenge of financial troubles has destroyed many Christian lives. A little financial problem and you're asking for handouts, or applying for bank loans; why is it that Christians believe lies more than they do the truth? How long did Abraham wait for His blessing of a child, and how long did it take for Israel to reach Canaan from Egypt? We do not decide when we get blessed, we do not have control over that. What we have control over is what we give. Blessings are not a matter of needing them—that is, you do not receive financial breakthroughs because you need them. God uses our difficulties to strengthen us, to prepare us for what is to come, for both the blessing and challenges that come with the blessing. You receive a blessing because you are ready for it, not because you need it.

Yes, you love that shoe, you want that car, you want to buy that house, but you can't afford it. How else will you learn to be disciplined when it comes to finances, how else will you learn how to spend money the right way at the right time? You cannot feed the hungry if you do not understand their situation; knowing hunger and understanding hunger are two different things.

Christians are now found spending years in challenges when they were only meant to do so for a short period of time. It is not because God has abandoned you, it is because you are not ready for that blessing. You keep avoiding that challenge by finding your own solutions rather than waiting for God to give you a solution. This, then, becomes the point where people allow desperation to overcome them. Do you love your job, or were you desperate for a source of income? If you go into a relationship because you are lonely, what spirit is loneliness, is it a spirit of darkness or a spirit of light? I have never read anywhere in the Bible where it said God blessed them with the spirit of loneliness. That loneliness will be the foundation of destruction for your relationship, you will never have peace in your relationship. Yeah sure, you'll be happy for five minutes, but you'll be unhappy for ten minutes.

These things might seem unimportant and basic, but in the long run, they will determine the direction of your life. If you do not know where you are going, if you do not know your future with God, if you do not know God's purpose for your life, you make it easy for Satan to mislead you, to direct you to a future that *he* wants for you. You can pretty much guess that *that* is a future with no peace at all. But if you believe that what you see with your physical eyes will give you peace—then, you are headed for disaster. Jesus never sought after anything that this world had to offer because He knew where His peace came from.

"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You."

Isaiah 26:3

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the ease at which a life of peace and joy is achieved; by trusting in the Lord. But how do we go about trusting in the Lord? To trust in the Lord is to forgive those that offend you, to bless those that curse you, to give to the needy, to help those that are in need—to trust in the Lord is to love all people regardless of their religion or beliefs. We are living in very dangerous times, do not let up; remain extremely vigilant. It is the little things that make a big difference. Nothing happens by chance; that incident when someone cut in front of you when you were driving and you were offended, that incident when a colleague said something that offended you—these may seem small and insignificant to you, but Satan knows that they are powerful enough to alter the course of your entire life.

As a Christian, refuse to be offended. After all that they did to Him, Jesus chose to forgive them (**Luke 23:35**), because He knew where His hope was, where His salvation was. We have people who are blaming the government for their situations, people who are divorced, businesses that are struggling, families divided, and sickness and disease claiming many lives; the main reason for all this suffering is unforgiveness. Jesus warned us that there will come a time when unforgiveness has overtaken humanity to the point of us killing each other for foolish things (**Matthew 24**). Look at the wars around us. Look at the politics of your nation; how can leaders who are divided amongst themselves think that they can build a strong nation (**Matthew 12:25**)?

Politicians now campaign by highlighting other politicians' mistakes and speaking negatively about other politicians. Unforgiveness has taken over, hatred, anger, bitterness, and jealousy have taken over. All these sicknesses and diseases that we have proudly given names to, all that they *are* is demons—sin has blinded us to the truth, sin has blinded us from seeing their point of origin; unforgiveness. As a Christian, have you never asked yourself why all these sicknesses such as cancer, HIV, high blood pressure, brain tumours, arthritis, or whatever other sickness, why are they nowhere to be found in the Bible? The only sicknesses the Bible speaks of are skin diseases and blindness, and the lame; those are the only ones we acknowledge and ask God to have mercy upon us—anything else is a demon.

So why don't you simply command that illness out of your life? Why is your heart full of fear, why are you doubting? If you had as much faith in God as you did in your pills, you would know just how powerful God truly is. Your challenge is there to awaken you to the power of God, to open your eyes to the truth, to prepare you for what God has planned for you, and to strengthen you for what is to come. Do not be ignorant! All blessings come with their own set of challenges. Just as happy as you were when you were blessed with a car, and now you are complaining about petrol prices, such is the manner of blessings—such is the way of life. Challenges are unavoidable.

Be very watchful; one dirty cup in the sink is enough of a weapon for Satan to use in destroying a marriage. The enemy is not walking around with horns on its head and fangs for teeth, no. It has covered itself in what you want, it smells like your favourite scent, and it appears to be the best thing that has ever happened to you. That is why, as a Christian, no matter how good it may look or sound, no matter how much you need it—take it to God first before you accept it. Pray, and ask God if it comes from Him or not. The enemy knows what you need, and it is ready to give it to you. But when the enemy gives, it steals something even more valuable behind your back—you will not see it now, but you will greatly feel its effects at a later stage.

What are you building? That business of yours, is God involved, or are you on your own? Is God involved in your marriage, or are you on your own? Is God involved in your family, or are you going it alone? Our talents, skills, experience, or abilities are incapable of building something long-lasting—that is, they do not have the power to breathe life into anything. When Jesus' disciples showed Him the beautiful temples of Jerusalem, Jesus said to His disciples,

"Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down"

Matthew 24:2

Yes, you look lovely as a couple, but are you such in heart? Your business strategies are groundbreaking, you live in a beautiful home with your family lacking for nothing; but on what foundation is it built?

Is it built on forgiveness? is it built on humility? is it built on love? is it built on hope? is it built on patience? is it built on unity? What is the foundation of that business, of that relationship, what are you standing on? When God wants to use you, are you available or are you just too busy building your life? How many times a day do you read your Bible, how many times a day do you pray? Where your hope is, *that* is what you will prioritize. What is the most important thing in your life right now? Whatever it may be, that is where your hope is—but is it capable of granting you salvation? When it is time for you to pray, and you are too busy doing whatever, will that thing guarantee you a ticket into heaven, or have you forgotten what the ultimate goal is? As long as you believe that it is your bosses who pay you your salary, you will always be a slave to sin.

All things *are* by God's grace. That so-called witch or devil worshiper did not wake up today because Satan blessed them with another day, no! It is by God's grace that they are alive; and when God gives, He gives with complete love. So then, if God chose to love them, who am I to do the opposite? Everything is by grace, and love is the seal that completes it all. If you want to know who you are, start by loving your neighbor, start by loving those that do not share the same faith as you, start by loving sinners, and start by loving your enemies. By doing so, you will know God, and you will understand what God meant when He said He made men in His own image. Remember this: love is not love until it is given away.

KNOW THE TRUTH

What is your truth? Is it rooted in the word of God or is it determined by your circumstances? What is truth, and how does the word of God define truth?

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'"

John 8:31-32

So, the only way to know the truth is by abiding in Jesus' word. Sounds simple enough, does it not? Not so much when it comes to the application of His Word. By loving your neighbor, you shall know the truth, by blessing all those who curse you the truth shall be revealed to you, by forgiving all those who offend you the truth shall be revealed to you. It is not the *knowledge* of the Bible that reveals the truth; you may know the Bible from Genesis to Revelations and still not know Jesus. It is not by knowing the word that the Spirit of God is revealed to us, but by reverence and complete submission to the word of God is the truth revealed. When you act upon the Word of God, only then does the Word come alive in your life, thus, leading you to the truth.

It is utterly impossible to do anything written in the word of God without the Spirit of God giving you the strength you need to do so. This leads us to a very powerful verse in the book of **John**.

"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him..."

John 14:16-17

You cannot hope to reach the truth on your own, the truth in God's Word is not a concept of knowledge, it cannot be defined by human logic. What other way is there to explain how caring for your neighbor can cure you of a life-threatening illness? How on earth can you explain how forgiving those that offend you will give you prosperity and understanding? The problem began when we reduced the kingdom of God to human understanding. If it were even remotely possible for us to discover the truth for ourselves, we would have done that centuries ago, there would have never been a need for Jesus to be born in the flesh, and we certainly would have never needed the Holy Spirit. But

we are human, foolish in our ways, ignorant, hateful, selfish, full of pride, sexual immorality, and a murderous generation; we are enemies of God, with the expectation of someday obtaining salvation.

I ask again, what is your truth? Is it your struggles? Is it your sickness? Is it your financial struggles? Is it unforgiveness? Is it doubts? Is it worries or is it fear? Is your truth in line with the Word of God or are you simply improvising? The Word of God is truth, and yet, the Word of God without the Spirit of God is powerless, just as the Spirit of God is powerless without the Word of God. The reason why there are no miracles in churches, even when there are, they are few and far in-between, is because the word of God is not one with the Spirit of God in our churches. We no longer have children of God, we have brothers and sisters of God, some of whom are even God's parents. What is your truth, are your needs guided by your selfish ambitions or are you led by the Spirit of God? In everything that you want, in everything that you believe you need; if you are the only one who is to benefit from it, then your truth is not rooted in the Word. What are you praying for, do your enemies have peace? Do all those who offended you have peace or do you not care?

When God blesses you, are people benefiting from your blessing? God blessed Abraham with Isaac, and here we are still benefiting from it. God blessed Hannah with Samuel, and the whole of Israel benefited. God blessed Solomon with wisdom, and here we are still benefiting from it. What has God blessed you with, what is your truth? The secret of blessings is in giving; because all that comes from God is impossible to contain in one life, it is meant for the masses. That is why the Bible teaches us,

"Blessed is the hand that gives more than the hand that receives"

Acts 20:35

Blessed are those that adhere to the spirit of love, to the spirit of giving. That is why the giver is the one who is supposed to say thank you because the giver is more blessed. When you give, you are helping God, you are availing yourself as a tool for the goodness of His gospel. When you give, you restore your relationship with God, and you purify your life. A pure life attracts success, it attracts strength, peace, and holiness. I use the word attract because all these things are received through the Holy Spirit, and complete obedience to the Word of God. When you commit yourself wholeheartedly to the Word of God, God makes it a point that He teaches you His Word through the challenges you go through and mistakes you make to give you a deeper understanding of His Word, His truth.

The truth of God's word is not a concept of knowledge. Look at your situation; what are you in need of, what is it that you want God to bless you with? Then ask yourself this: why do you believe that you do not already have it? Is it because you do not see it with your fleshly eyes, do you need to see it before you believe you have it? Is that your truth, Thomas? Blessed are those who believe without seeing (**John 20:29**). Jesus said in the book of **Mark 9:23**, *"If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."* Worry and belief do not go hand in hand, fear and belief do not go hand in hand; they are in conflict with one another.

Unbelief is not as simple as, *you believe or you don't believe*, no. What keeps us from believing the word of God is sin. Anger blinds you to the truth of how much you really need the person you are angry at; grudges are a cage of limitation that is full of pain and torment. You are angry at them because they do not act in the manner you desire them to. They offend you because you are jealous of them; selfish ambition has taken root in your heart.

What is your truth? Why do you not like them, why are you not talking to him, why do you try by all means to avoid her, why is a simple *hello* to them such an impossible task? Why is it that when things go wrong you always have someone to blame, but never yourself? The government this, my neighbor that, my family this, my colleagues that; who told you people were created to please you? Can you not see the kind of suffering you are inviting into your life? It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man (**Psalm 118:8, Micah 7:5-6**). The only way they will do what you want them to do is when you love them—and the greatest way to show love to a person is by praying for them.

It is impossible to love God while you harbor hatred for your brother (**1 John 4:20**). That neighbor you despise, that annoying coworker, that former friend of yours you hate so much was made in the image of God, and as such, to hate them is to hate God. So, are you a Christian or are you a hypocrite? My fellow Christians, do not be yoked together with greed, do not be yoked together with hatred, for those are an abomination before God. Where there is love there is God, and where there is God there is freedom. There is no greater truth than that of love; he who loves is born of God and knows God (**1 John 4:7-8**).

What is your truth? Without love, you cannot forgive; it is simply not possible. You cannot call yourself a Christian and not have love; that is not the gospel of Jesus, that is your own gospel. Love is never self-seeking; love looks around to see where it is needed. Yes, you know, but the day you understand what it means when we say God is for us, that is the day you will free yourself from the worries of this world. When you truly know that God is for you, you do not have time to focus on your troubles. When you look back at the victories God has given you, and the troubles that God has brought you out of, you will realize that the positives far outweigh the negatives.

If you live your life according to what you see with your fleshly eyes, and what you hear with your fleshly ears, you will never have peace.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Hebrews 11:1

Fleshly eyes see darkness; spiritual eyes see light. The kingdom of darkness knows how much we are dependent on what we see with our fleshly eyes, and so it seizes every chance to lead us astray from God's truth. Look at how you are always comparing yourself to people who have more money than you, healthier than you, why? When we focus on the fleshly things, we fight the wrong battles. No one wins when fighting the wrong battles, and you are not the only one who loses. Look around you, what do you see? Look at a delivered former drug addict, and notice how many changes they go

through; the way they talk, as opposed to the way they used to talk when they were doing drugs, the way they walk, and their cleanliness.

The filthiness of drug users, their speech pattern, that itchiness; most people would attribute it to drugs, and they wouldn't be wrong. But there's an even deeper truth to it, it is simply a demon manifesting itself in a physical form. The outward appearance of drug addicts reveals the state of their hearts. The same goes for you; how you look on the outside tells us all we need to know about you on the inside. It is not as simple as, you look good on the outside which means you look good on the inside, no. You can be suffering from sickness physically, and yet, be pure on the inside. You can be the healthiest person in the world, and yet, suffer from sickness spiritually. A person can be poor, and suffering spiritually, and again, a person can be poor, and very strong spiritually. Real strength cannot be measured by the material; the truth is not a concept of knowledge—it cannot be quantified.

Anything that is not in line with the word of God, anything not originating from God is a lie. Hatred, offense, anger, unforgiveness, jealousy, bitterness, laziness, pain of the past, worry, doubt, and fear; all these are lies that the devil has masterfully used to destroy many people's lives. Yes, your neighbor did something terrible to you, but what is the real truth of the situation? The Bible teaches us to forgive our persecutors. The only truth in that situation is your forgiveness of your neighbor; anything other than forgiveness is a lie.

What is your truth? Your having financial problems is a lie, that sickness of yours is a lie, and that thing causing you and your spouse to argue all the time is a lie. What is your truth? Is your truth rooted in the Word, or is your truth a reality preached by human wisdom? Which Jesus are you following? Many people today only know the Jesus preached by man—that is, the historical Jesus, the Jesus of events captured in literature. Only a few know the Jesus that is revealed by the Holy Spirit. Do you even know the difference between the two? Because only one of these two is capable of giving life.

Before it escalated to the point where you and your neighbor began to argue, it began with sin. Every trouble you are facing today is your fault—you are the only one to blame.

"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

James 1:13-15

Sin results in death. Our troubles, the difficulties we go through in life are brought on by sin. Our sins open doors for which demons use to enter and torment us. What are your desires, are they in line with the word of God? Yes, you may desire to start your own business, but will that business take away your peace or will it give you peace? Whatever desires you may have, them being good does not

necessarily mean it will give you peace. Yes, you love that business, but is it God's will for you? If your peace is measured by what you can see—that is, by what you can see, smell, touch, or hear, then you are nowhere near where God wants you to be.

When we desire what the world has to offer, it creates room for poverty, sickness, and financial troubles; all these tangibles that we desire are the reason why we see all this suffering all over the world. They are not a sin, and desiring them is not a sin, but trouble comes when we love them more than we love God. We have become the type of Christians who only focus and tirelessly seek good times and fear bad times—I mean, fear challenges. Paul prayed to God asking Him to remove the thorn from his side, but God rejected his plea and told him His power is made perfect in tough times (**2 Corinthians 12:9**). Tough times are what strengthen us as Christians, not good times, not blessings; what brings us closer to God, what makes us trust God even more are the troubles that we go through.

Let me tell you what a real blessing is; Daniel in the den of lions was a real blessing, Abraham departing from his home without knowing his destination was a blessing, Abraham sacrificing his only beloved son was a blessing, Moses' descent from rich prince to poor sheep herder was a blessing, David becoming a fugitive is a blessing, Joseph being sold to slavery by his own siblings is a blessing, Jonah being swallowed up by a fish for three days was a blessing, Paul and Silas being thrown into prison was a blessing, Lazarus dying was a blessing, and Jesus being crucified on the cross is the greatest blessing of them all.

The greater the blessing, the greater the suffering. So, when you say you want blessings, what kind of blessings are you looking for? Is it money? Is it a vehicle? Are you seeking healing perhaps, or maybe a huge mansion? The reason we as Christians are so lost, why our relationship with God has been so severely damaged is because we only want the good things in life and fear the bad—that is, we fear challenges, we fear what has come to give us our breakthrough, we fear what strengthens our relationship with God, we fear the one thing that glorifies God in our lives. How else will He prove His power and love for us if we keep running away from challenges? The smallest hint of a challenge and you are already on your knees asking for a breakthrough.

If challenges are what strengthen us, if bad times are what bring us closer to God—then why is it that we only want good times? Why do we fear challenges? Have we fallen so far from grace as to reject the truth and embrace lies as life while we point fingers and blame others for the chaos these lies bring into our lives? If I asked you how many people hurt you, you'd probably give me a list the length of your body, but if I asked you how many people you've hurt, you'll start scratching your head because you're perfect, right? For me, the fear of challenges indicates that I do not desire a relationship with God—after all, challenges are the only thing capable of bringing me closer to God. For gold to be pure, it needs to go through fire. So, then, my fear of challenges can only mean one thing; I love the world more than I love God. To love the world more than you love God is to love sin more than you love righteousness; that is the whole truth. What is your truth?

I have always been curious; when we chase after these blessings, is there maybe a verse in the Bible that says the blessed shall receive salvation or am I missing something here? The ultimate goal has been and will always be the salvation of our souls. Jesus did not come into this world with the promise of comfort but came with the promise of eternal life. Don't get me wrong, we all want these blessings, but who deceived you into believing they give life? In a single day, thousands died, all as a result of the wickedness in their hearts (**Numbers 21:6-9**). But remember, those same people shared in the

blessing of the red sea, they too received the blessing of manna, they too drank from the water purified with an olive branch, they too drank from the blessing of water sipping from a rock that is Christ; and yet, with all the blessings they received, they still could not reach the promised land because as blessed as they were, their hearts were filled with wickedness.

You may be blessed with all the material this world has to offer, but do not be fooled into believing it means *salvation*. What are you crying for, will it guarantee you your salvation? Whatever it is that you are crying for, God *will* give it to you because God is love itself. Yet, on the other hand, that blessing of yours is delaying because God knows that if He gave you a car, you'd go to all the wrong places, if He gave you money, you'd believe even more that a fridge full of food means life, and He knows that you'd destroy that marriage in no time if He gave it to you. God's time is the best time. What is your truth?

These blessings that we are crying for, *they* are what make it easy for the kingdom of darkness to feed us lies. Again, I ask; can you even tell the difference between a blessing from God and a blessing from the devil? Money is money, huh? What is from God comes with peace and is permanent. It is not the material itself that is permanent, but the spirit behind it. After all, God is spirit. Yes, you are receiving money, but what spirit is behind that money? Yes, you love your partner, but what spirit is behind that relationship, did it come from God or you don't even know? When God gives, He gives life. You will know that your blessing is alive when you are not the only one who is benefiting from it. Yes, you are blessed, but, is your neighbor sharing in your joy, or do you only love them in words? Is your community benefiting from your blessings? Are your enemies benefiting from your blessings? Are your persecutors benefiting from your blessings? If that blessing is from God, you and your family will not be the only ones benefiting from it.

Blessings that feed hatred, unforgiveness, offense, bitterness, pride, lack of patience, jealousy, and selfish ambition are not blessings of life; anything that leads to sin does not come from God, no matter how big it is. No matter how much you need it, if it leads you to sin, it did not come from God. God's blessings are meant to protect us against sin. If me forgiving my persecutors means God blesses me with healing and peace, this means whenever I am persecuted, I will choose to forgive. Does that not mean I have been protected from the sin of unforgiveness? A blessing that is from God is untouchable, and it makes no sense to the human mind. Just like Daniel spending a whole night with hungry lions and coming out without a single scratch (**Daniel 6**); in what world does that make sense? Can you imagine being sold into slavery and ending up as the second most powerful man in the country (**Genesis 37 to Chapter 41**)?

The things of God are not easy to accept. Can you bring yourself to sacrifice what you love the most, whether it be your child, partner, business, family, or whatever it may be? Can you even imagine yourself sacrificing it? We struggle with even the most basic things, such as remaining silent when someone says something offensive to us. If we fail at such foolishly small things, how then, can we expect to be able to handle big challenges that come with the power to change a whole nation? Are you strong enough? But then again, how can you be strong when you fear challenges? Sickness strikes and your heart is filled with fear. A little financial difficulty, and you're asking for help from friends and family or going into debt with bank loans. You believe that every problem needs to be solved now, because God's time is just a waste of time, right? What kind of life are you living, what kind of Christian are you? What is your truth? Peace is found in obeying Jesus Christ, and anyone who chooses to obey

Jesus Christ must be ready for a fight. As a Christian, challenges are your friend—it is in difficult times that our son-ship with God is proven.

Those that God loves, He rebukes. And how does God rebuke us? By allowing challenges into our lives. Challenges are a sign that indeed, we are under the shadow of God; He uses them to teach us and bring us closer to Him with a greater understanding of His Word (**Hebrews 12:5-8**). Just as gold needs to go through fire to be purified, so too do human beings to purify their hearts, and our fire comes in the form of challenges.

Why, then, do we fear challenges so much? If challenges bring us closer to God, should we not be rejoicing in times of challenges and praying in good times? Paul said,

“Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong”.

2 Corinthians 12:10

Paul knew that his strength did not come from being healthy, his strength did not come from being loved by people, and his strength did not come from a fridge full of food, no. Paul knew that true strength came from the Spirit of God. When everything is going smoothly, we are quick to forget about God, our blessings become our god and in turn, end up controlling us as opposed to us in control of our blessings. You prayed for a job, and yet here you are skipping on tithe because you have too many responsibilities. You prayed for a breakthrough in your business, and yet, you’re the one too busy to give God your time.

What struggles are you presently facing? What is God saying about it? Not everything is what it seems. You might think you need money when in fact, the real problem is *that* family curse on your finances. It might be easy to blame the decline of your business on the economy, but what about that spirit of failure that’s been tormenting you your whole life? Our battle is not a fleshly one, but spiritual. As Christians, difficult times are what bring us our blessings. From Genesis to Revelations, no one was ever blessed during a season of celebration. Whether we like it or not, pain comes before the celebration. No servant is greater than the master; as long as you are on this earth, trouble will always follow you.

Understand seasons; there is a season of challenges, and there is a season of blessing. A life that has both, is a balanced life. If you are going through a season of challenges, do not panic, it is your time. Be watchful, and pray—wait for God’s time, your season of blessings is coming. However long it takes, be patient, God knows what He is doing. Stop seeking help from people, human wisdom will never be capable of giving life. However, if God is the one who led you to that person, then of course it is a different story. Make no mistake; to know that God wants you to go to that person or that institution, and to assume God wants you to go to that person or that institution are two very different things. One of them will lead to your destruction.

Know your relationship with God. When you pray, God must respond—prayer is a dialogue between you and God. When you ask, God will even tell you when will He give you whatever it is you asked of Him. And when you ask, believe that you have received it; if you keep asking for the same thing over and over again, it is a sign that you do not believe that you have received it, you are only succeeding in demoralizing yourself. As a Christian, you must know your relationship with God, and when you know your relationship with God, you know where you are going, and when you know where you are going, you will know who you are. A Christian who knows who they are does not simply accept whatever comes their way no matter how good it may be. Those that know who they are, they know their lane with God, and they only accept that which God has prepared for them.

But how do you tell the difference between what is yours and what is not yours? Just because you make a lot of money in that field does not mean you belong there. If you use fleshly materials as your compass, then be prepared to live a life of misdirection, a life of strife, a life that is full of torment, and little else anything good. Many people in the world are very rich, and yet, are not where God wants them to be. Success does not necessarily mean God's grace. You may be rich and yet an enemy of God.

If that blessing is yours, you will enjoy it even when trouble comes your way. How many job positions have you left because of challenges? How many relationships have you lost because of challenges? If it comes from God, whatever trouble may come, it will remain standing. If that blessing does not belong to you, it will never give you peace, it will be trouble after trouble. As a Christian, knowing your relationship with God, and knowing your future with God will save you a lot of pain. When you know what God wants to do with you, finding what is yours will come naturally—that is, effortlessly.

I might call myself an author, but to me, it is just a technical term for what I do professionally. Writing books is only a tool for the real blessing—preaching the good news. Where you see an accountant, I see a Christian who will deliver a company's finances from darkness, strengthening the company to make a difference in the community. The real blessing is not visible to the naked eye, what is seen with the naked eye is only the means by which the blessing operates through.

The blessing itself does not need much to do great. When you look for much, you are only disturbing your blessing. That is why today, if you ask a pastor what their lane is, if you ask a prophet what their lane is, many of them do not even know what that is. Yes, you might be a pastor, but in what lane are you a pastor? Because no two pastors are the same. If you are reading this book with your heart, you will know exactly what I am. I know my lane, and that is why I have confidence in God's power. I know my future with God, and it is impossible for me to achieve it without completely relying on God for everything, even in the smallest of things. It's not easy, I can tell you that much. The hardest thing is obeying the Word of God. If it was easy, you wouldn't be holding grudges, you would have forgiven them the moment they offended you.

When you receive a blessing, it will have life in it. If your blessing is alive there will be no need for you to tell anyone, it will reveal itself. Ever wondered why your enemies know so much about you? I don't need to tell you what I am, if my blessing is truly alive, it will reveal itself. As for my lane, I will gladly reveal it to you. From the first chapter of this book my lane has been screaming at you, it is what I live for because it brings me so much joy. My lane is **righteousness**; God has blessed me with the gift of preaching and teaching about righteous living. Does that give you an idea of what I mean when I say *lane*? There is a lady I know whose lane is restoring broken marriages, another lady who loves taking

care of orphans, and a guy who was a warlock and is now delivering other warlocks and bringing them to Jesus Christ.

So, what is your lane? Look at all the prophets of old who prophesied the coming of the Messiah, they all prophesied about the same thing, but in different ways, because each one of them had their own lane, and no two of them were the same. That is why having a human being as your role model is not only foolish but is detrimental to your spiritual life. Yeah sure, you can have someone that inspires you, but not to the point of you comparing yourself to them. What if they commit suicide, will you do the same? As Christians, our role model is one; Jesus Christ, the only one who is without sin. How can you look up to someone who makes mistakes, who's capable of holding grudges, someone who fails; how can you look up to someone who needs forgiveness of sin?

This is why the world is upside down today—we seek guidance from successful sinners, rather than seek guidance from He who is without sin. Why is this? Because the truth of the matter is that humanity has lost its way to the point of praising and enjoying sin.

You may be able to fool yourself, you may be able to fool your family, friends, church, or even your pastor; but you will never fool your heart. The heart will only be satisfied by what belongs to it. That is why, when you hold a grudge, your heart is never at peace. But when you forgive, you feel as if a huge weight has been lifted off your shoulders, you feel at peace because forgiveness, not grudges, is what belongs to the heart. So, what are you doing? Are you at peace in it even when there is nothing to gain, but everything to lose?

Know yourself as a Christian, know your truth.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

We live in an era when Christians are more ignorant than ever, we live in a time when Christians believe in what they see with their naked eyes rather than what the Word of God tells them. I, myself, can never tell you what a Christian is, but I can tell you what God says a Christian *is*. From Genesis to Revelations, we have been given great examples of men and women who, because of their obedience to God, saw the glory of God in their lives in ways that no one can possibly comprehend. But the one thing that brings joy to my heart, is the one common thing they all had: Initially, they all had nothing, but eventually came to have everything.

For Moses to see God in his life, he needed to forfeit all of his royal affluence, and Job had to experience complete loss to see God in his life. David began with nothing, just a mere shepherd who ended up as king of Judah. Joseph was sold into slavery by his siblings, and yet, he ended up as the second most powerful man in all of Egypt. Each of these men had nothing to boast about, because of all they accomplished, it had nothing to do with their might or intelligence. It had nothing to do with their might or intelligence. All the glory belonged to God, and that is why when we look at these men today, we marvel at God's power in their lives more than anything else.

Today, we are Christians of sight and not Christians of faith. When a doctor informs you that you are terminally ill, you believe him, but you refuse to trust the Bible when it says you are healed. When your bank balance is low, you begin to fear and worry, as if waking up tomorrow is in your hands, as if life can be bought with money. You are a hypocrite; how foolish can you be? You make use of the Scriptures to further your personal interests, additionally, when those same interests work against you, you point fingers, you hold grudges, you destroy relationships, you covet, you steal, you lie, you cheat, you undermine, you judge, and you jealous. All because you look for what is temporary and ignore what is permanent.

The kingdom of God is not for the weak in heart, because to be a Christian is to be a friend of God and an enemy of the world. To be weak in heart is to hold grudges, to be jealous of others, to gossip, to steal, and many other fruits of darkness. When you pray to God asking for something, God judges the motive of your prayer, because He wants to know why are you asking for this—is it for your own selfish reasons or is it to further the kingdom of God? This is one of the reasons why we do not receive what we are praying for because the motive is wrong. The right motive will always be in line with God's will for us. To be out of God's will is to be an enemy of God.

God desires for us to totally and entirely depend on Him. That job in which you have placed your hopes in, when the day of trouble comes, it will not be able to save you. That husband or wife that you trust so much, when the day of disappointment comes, you will hate each other. The trouble with investing your hopes in what you have is that if it breaks, you will break along with it. All these blessings you are crying for, not even one of them can save you from the threats that this generation is facing. We are living in times where rich people are committing suicide, where healthy folks are mysteriously dying, where ugly people are happily married and beautiful people are divorced and bitter.

This is no time for vanity, because as terrible as things are today, The Bible tells us that things will only worsen to the point where there will be unprecedented suffering (**Matthew 24**). This is not a question of, “*Why is God allowing this?*”, no! All of this is because of our ignorance, it is because of our sins, it is because we continue to build without God. We continue to go into marriages because of looks, money, or position. Our leaders make decisions without consulting God, we pick relationships based on what they can do for us rather than what we can give; we want to see ourselves with rich, successful people while we are segregating poor people. Christians are flocking to church in search of wealth while abandoning their connection with God even though they know that only the pure in heart shall see God (**Matthew 5:8**). We can do nothing without the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is attracted by nothing if not a pure heart.

At times, I'd wonder: do Christians ever ask themselves why God honors the poor and leaves the rich to their own devices?

“Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters. Hasn't God chosen the poor in this world to be rich in faith? Aren't they the ones who will inherit the kingdom He promised to those who love Him?”

James 2:5 (NLT Bible)

When you read the book of **2 Kings 24**, the king of Babylon took all the wealthy and influential people into captivity. The king was also captured, his whole family and all of his subordinates. But what is more interesting, is verse 14 which tells us that only the poor were left behind. Look around you, is that not what is happening? Let us look at this further.

Take a good look at those who are *blessed* financially: When trouble comes, the first they will do is look at their bank balance. Well, what do you know? They can easily afford to fix the problem. On the other hand, a homeless man faces the same problem, and because of his situation, he has no choice but to depend on God. Therefore, the first thing he will do is pray to God for a solution. You approached the situation in a fleshly manner—that is, you are fighting a fleshly battle, while the poor are fighting a spiritual battle. What you do not know is that that problem first began in the spirit and slowly manifested itself in the flesh. The more you approach your challenges in a fleshly manner, the more they grow spiritually until it gets to a point where your intelligence is useless against it and your finances cannot help you.

It began with a little scratch on your car, and later on, a small bump. Sometime later you had to replace a broken tail light, and yesterday you were missed by a car while driving home. All these seem like normal, everyday things right up until you are involved in a terrible car accident. Satan knows that if he attacks you with something unbelievable, you will run to God. But now he uses what he knows you will consider to be normal and you will ignore it until it is too late. How many people are disabled due to illness or tragedy and are now crying to God for healing? How many loved ones were lost? How many people today are suffering from issues that could have been prevented?

Where have you put your faith, and where have you put your hope? In your medical aid perhaps? Or maybe in your business? This is the source of your anxiety, the source of your panicking, and the source of your worries. All because what you have put your trust in is now turning against you. You fear hunger, you fear car accidents, you fear being alone, you fear sickness, you fear death; and now, because of all these fears, the devil has a variety of tools at his disposal to afflict you. You have faith in your job, and you have placed your faith in that monthly income, but when it turns against you, you're now arguing with your managers because they refuse to grant you a raise or a promotion. You want to quit your job and find one that pays better. You are constantly arguing with your spouse because you trust them too much, and when they disappoint you, it hurts a lot. When other businesses are growing while yours is stagnant, you are jealous of them because your hope is in your business.

You hate them because you put too much trust in yourself; you disobey God and expect good results. But now everything is turning against you, and yet, those same things that are turning against you are the same things you are going to God and begging Him to bless you with. What kind of foolishness is that? It has filled your heart with hatred, anger, unforgiveness, offense, laziness, jealousy, bitterness, bad feelings toward others, gossip, and all kinds of sinful behavior. You put your make-up on, you put on your suit going to church pretending to be a righteous Christian when you know very well that you are a slave to sin.

We are constantly putting ourselves first while claiming to be worshipers of the God of Israel. We are a generation that is constantly turning against God and worshiping other gods. You want everything to come to you your own way in your own time, and if it does not, you make a plan. Why are you torturing yourself like this? Do you not see the dangers of this world? If you live your life by sight, then you are inviting trouble into your life. Satan knows that people believe so much in what they see that they will build their own monuments, they will build their own idols to worship—the devil now uses this to set a trap for all who are ignorant. You cry tears when a celebrity who lives halfway around the globe, whom you've never met dies, but pay no mind when a local pastor passes on.

When challenges come, how do you react? Do you retaliate when offended by someone? Do you go for loans when having financial troubles? Do you get into a relationship with the next good-looking person just to quench your loneliness? Do you point fingers when failure comes, quit and change direction? Which altar does anger come from? Which altar does jealousy, gossip, grudges, fear, doubt, worry, hatred, criticism or lust come from? Me and you both know they do not come from the kingdom of God. How, then, can you honestly say you are a worshiper of the Lord?

To say, "Jesus is Lord", in truth and in spirit, is not just a matter of you believing what you are saying. For this to be true about your life it needs to be alive in your life, and by alive, I mean: when you say Jesus is Lord in your life, you mean forgiveness is Lord in your life, you mean patience, love, kind-heartedness, loyalty, humbleness, goodness, honesty, truth, faithfulness, and obedience is Lord in your life. If Jesus is indeed Lord in your life, you will see everyone as important, whether they are a prophet or a thief, not just those of high social standing. You might even esteem the lowest of this world (which includes the poor, the so-called "ugly", and the disabled), higher than those that this world worships, just as the Word of God has taught us (**James 2:1-7**).

What the world worships is what the world sees with its fleshly eyes, but how can it not when it is blinded by sin to its own tragic reality? The world is blinded to the realities of spiritual warfare, and yet, it is slave to the sinful desires that war within it. Jesus said,

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you..."

John 14:27

What *is* peace, is it financial security? Is it having everything you need? The kingdom of God is peace itself. **John 3:8** reads,

"The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Take a good look at your loved ones, take a good look at your family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, your favourite celebrity, your pastor, or anyone you have a close relationship with. Yes, you may know the challenges they've been through, even if *you* are the one who raised them, you do not know where they come from—Mary and Joseph will attest to this.

Jesus was the only one who knew where we came from. That is why He was without sin, He knew where it was we are going, who our Father is, and what it meant to be a Christian. Your true self is not that flesh you are constantly feeding and worrying every time you are unable to, no. Your true self is that spirit being inside you, that spirit being that you are constantly torturing by holding on to unforgiveness and holding on to bad feelings toward others. How can you hope to have peace with such a heart? All the money in the world will never be enough to release you from the prison of unforgiveness.

The Bible teaches us that God is love, God is peace, God is forgiveness, patience, and unity; the Bible teaches us that God is all goodness. The Bible also teaches us that God made man and woman in His own image (**Genesis 1:27**). If that is so, this also means that my true self is peace, I am forgiveness, patience, unity, and I am all goodness. That is what I mean when I say I am a child of God. That is why scripture says, *"Man is born to trouble"* (**Job 5:7**). We are not born with it, but into it. All this negative that is holding you down: unforgiveness, doubt, worry, anger, bitterness, jealousy, hatred, laziness, fear, and unbelief—you found them right here on Earth; none of them came from God.

So, then, why are you holding on to them? Can you not see that they are a cage of darkness that has imprisoned you and completely stopped you from aligning with your destiny? Your struggles are not because God does not love you, they are because you do not know where you come from, you do not know where you are going, and that is why you are suffering. Your heart is full of fear because your spirit knows that sin invites punishment. There is a huge difference between a challenge and a punishment. Why is your heart full of doubt, do you not believe that the Lord will provide? The devil hits you with a little sickness, instead of praising God and thanking Him, you check your life insurance to make sure everything is in order. You trust human wisdom more than you trust God.

The kingdom of God is not only a kingdom of peace, but it is peace itself. God's peace is not conditional—I mean, you can be sick, and yet, still be at peace, you can be poor, yet, be at peace. Jesus

never prayed to ask for blessings, in all His prayers, He prayed asking for strength. Even though He had nothing, He knew that if He had God's peace in His heart, it meant that He had everything. God is faithful to those who are faithful to Him.

We are spiritual beings in a physical body learning to live on earth. The flesh can be very dangerous if you are not careful, ignorance can be very deadly to a Christian life. The moment you sit down alone trying to relax, problems come flooding into your mind: "I don't have this, I don't have that, I feel pain here." You see a woman and start thinking what if I marry her, you see a man and think he'd make a perfect husband. This alone shows us just how dangerous the flesh is, and that is why God gave us a way out, a way to overcome it—by meditating on His word (**Joshua 1:8, Philippians 4:8**). When you continuously meditate on God's Word, sing hymns in your heart regularly, by doing so, you keep your heart in a continuous prayer mood. A heart that is continuously in a state of prayer is a heart that is prepared to receive the Holy Spirit. When difficulties come, you will be quick to respond in a way that pleases God.

Yes, we *will* make mistakes, after all, we are human, and there *will* be times when we are unfaithful to God's word. When you make those mistakes, don't run away from God, run to Him and He will strengthen you. God is spirit, and cannot be tempted by sin. Therefore, there is never a moment when God is not faithful to His Word. If God was in any way capable of being unfaithful to His Word, it would have made it impossible for us to be faithful to His Word. If the Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death, whether you like it or not, it *is* indeed so.

Leadership is not position; it is an example. Therefore, God gave us the gift of Jesus Christ who was without sin, who was neither wealthy nor of high social standard—at least in the flesh. Though He was poor, in the spirit He was the richest, though He was of low social standard, in the spirit He was the king of all kings. God gave us Christ as a perfect example of how to lead and how to follow; a good leader is a good follower. His leadership was not dependent on material or prestige, but it was wholly and completely dependent on the spirit of God. A good leader receives from God and gives to God's people. By *God's people*, I do not mean Christians, I speak of all human beings living and breathing today. What, then, is leadership? From the moment you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, you have become a leader by the authority of Christ Jesus.

This may sound mundane, and quite possibly, a lot of Christians might even misunderstand what it means to be in such a position. Christians today have adopted the attitude of condemning sinners rather than showing them the love of God. Death has become a norm to the point where people wear it as an accessory. To the naked eye, it looks good, but to the spiritual eye it reveals a very startling truth; we are in trouble. Yes, as the Bible teaches us, the enemy has taken over the world. But there is not even a single verse in the Bible that even slightly insinuates that the enemy is more powerful than God—if anything, from Genesis to Revelations, we keep on witnessing just how powerless the enemy *is* in the face of God.

But if you look at what is happening around the world, when you consider all of the calamities that are raging throughout the planet, they make it difficult to trust in God's might. But then again, that is the whole point. Your disbelief is not because God is not faithful, it is because you believe in what you see with your physical eyes. Killings, kidnappings, rape, oppression, economic crisis, storms destroying whole towns, abusive relationships, high divorce rates, child trafficking, hatred, anger; all these are rife all around us. Often, I'd hear people asking, "*Why would God allow this?*" This incredibly naive

question implies knowledge when it is obvious that the person who asks has no idea what is happening.

The kingdom of heaven is a very easy kingdom to comprehend, but with the prerequisite of a pure heart. An unclean heart is an enmity to God. That is where the true power of the kingdom of light is. The Bible teaches us that God is love, and by this, we understand that where there is love there is God, and where there is God there is freedom. This is also true of forgiveness, patience, humility, and loving your neighbor as yourself. In lament terms, to encompass all goodness is to be in the presence of God. Peace, breakthrough, protection, healing, blessings; these things are not assured by the knowledge of God or going to church, nor are they assured by your pastor laying hands on you, no! They are assured by being obedient to God's Word.

Consider this: I'd hear people talking about how their house was broken into, or how they were high-jacked and their car got stolen. In such situations, Christians would find it much easier to blame Satan and his army of demons. But what does the Bible say about all this? *"The wages of sin is death."* Death does not necessarily mean six feet underground—divorce is death, your business shutting down is death, your house broken into is death, your car accident is death, your financial struggles is death; anything and everything that does not come from God is death.

How, then, does God protect us, what is it that constitutes God's protection? Jesus said to His disciples, *"In this world you will face tribulation, but take heart, I have overcome"* (**John 16:33**). In this world, there is sickness, there is disease, there are financial troubles, there is death, there are economic troubles, there is divorce—in this world, there are all kinds of troubles, and as a Christian, you would be fooling yourself if you thought you will go through life without facing any of them, no servant is greater than his master. Just as Jesus went through all kinds of troubles, so shall we. So then, in the midst of all that is happening in and around your life, how do you know that God is protecting you?

Side note: there is a significant distinction between a challenge and a punishment. A challenge brings growth, a challenge brings a gift, and presents an opportunity to deepen your connection with God. A challenge is not meant to destroy you, but rather to make you stronger.

By today's Christian standards, people being sick around you while you stay healthy would constitute God protecting you, right? But what about those who actually get sick and are miraculously healed, were they not protected by God? If I had to guess, I'd say your definition of protection is something along the lines of avoiding trouble—that is, when the world is facing an economic crisis, your finances continue to flourish. That is your definition of protection, is it not? Well, you are not wrong, you are right. Although, you would be more on point if God had the same goal as you (We'll talk more about that a bit further down the road. For now, let us get back to protection).

There is a passage in the book of **1 Kings 22** that opens up a whole world of spiritual possibilities. This chapter speaks of prophet Micaiah the one prophet who stood against four hundred prophets and a king. First of all, things of the spirit do not operate how you think they operate, things of the spirit operate how God wants them to operate. Even Jesus Himself said, *"All things have been delivered to Me by My Father,"* (**Matthew 11:28**). If Jesus Himself never sought to act upon His own thoughts, His own conclusions, but strived to talk and behave exclusively in conformity with what God had commanded Him, who are we to do otherwise? Jesus never began to assume He knew what was going

on, but because He knew who God was, He committed Himself to obedience and was therefore able to discern the truth in all things.

When you read **1 Kings 2** reading from verses 19 to 22, it tells us of a certain spirit that stood before the Lord and petitioned the Lord to give it permission to go and be a lying spirit in the mouths of the four hundred prophets. The king of Israel favoured the four hundred prophets over Micaiah because the four hundred always told him what he wanted to hear rather than the truth. This alone tells us what kind of a king the king of Israel was; he did evil in the sight of the Lord. But let's take a closer look at the prophets whose lips were filled with lies.

As a Christian, the good or evil you do determine your future. The good you do today will be your witness tomorrow—the same is also true when you do evil. When you give to the needy today, when trouble comes tomorrow, the good you did will be your witness, it will kneel in front of God saying, *"Lord, remember your child."* Everything we do becomes our witness in the face of God, whether good or bad. What are you doing, what kind of trouble are you facing today?

We know that the four hundred prophets prophesied to the king only what he wanted to hear. By this we know that what they spoke did not come from God—that is, all they spoke was lies. Nothing that comes from darkness has the strength to stand the test of time. You may be enjoying it now, it may last a year, two years, or even twenty years, but eventually, it will crumble and fall. And the longer it lasts, the more distractive it will be when it finally falls, the more painful it will be. The kingdom of God is not for the faint-hearted, being a Christian is no child's play. The kingdom of darkness has succeeded in destructing many from the real thing, it has succeeded in shifting their focus from God's purpose in their lives to what can be easily destroyed.

People believe driving a fancy car means God loves them; you turn on your television, you see your celebrities wearing fancy clothes, and driving expensive cars and you believe they are living a *"soft"* life. You do not see the suffering they are under because you believe in what you see with your physical eyes. When they begin to commit suicide, when they die from car accidents, when they are shot dead by their own friends you are shocked because you believe that money means life. Many of these celebrities are suffering from something that they will never tell you; It's either some sickness or some condition that they cannot change of which they will never tell you about. Satan knows, that if these things are revealed, the kingdom of darkness will be exposed.

Do not get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with being a celebrity, in fact, it is a privilege, a blessing from God. But the only way it can be a good thing is if that celebrity is rooted in the word of God. God is our beginning and our end; He is the author and the curator of our lives. In whatever field or position you were born for, whether great or small, God has a purpose for you. But if you live your life according to what you see with your physical eyes, you will always be an easy target for Satan, he will use it to torture you.

Remember, God is spirit. There is no money in heaven, there are no cars in heaven; the only thing you will find in heaven is forgiveness, love, patience, obedience, unity, peace, and many other good things which cannot be seen with the naked eye. Satan wants you to believe in money because he knows that once you are desperate for money, you open the door for anger, disappointment, failure, unforgiveness, jealousy, hatred, betrayal, bitterness, laziness, and all kinds of tormenting spirits. Satan

can bless you with money, a car, a wife, a job, a house, and success, but the one thing he can never bless you with is peace of heart because that is a heavenly gift, it is a heavenly currency.

Anyone can say, *I don't like that person, I hate that person*, but not just anyone can forgive. To say I forgive you is not an easy thing, it is no small thing either. Real forgiveness comes from the heart. How can you forgive if you do not have peace of heart? All those who persecute you, all those who gossip about you, hate you, oppress you, betray you; these folks do all of this because they do not have inner peace. If indeed they had peace, they would be satisfied in their lives, there would be no need for them to hate, to be jealous of others, to hold grudges against others, to harbor bad feelings towards others, to condemn, to judge, to kill, to steal, to rape, to hit women or to be hit by men.

A great prophet of God once said, *"Do not tempt the devil to tempt you."* When you do things by your own strength, your own ability, you are inviting trouble. Your intelligence, your education, your money, your car, your spouse, your family, and your friends, none of these things have the power to save you when calamity comes, they instead, put you into more trouble. The same person who claims to love you is the same person who is discouraging you from tithing this month saying you will be short and struggle the whole month. But because you do not know the God you serve, because you do not know why you are tithing, you will believe them. Why put so much trust in a human being?

Because you have put your hope in money, it has now become your tormenter. Even when you do have money, when it is all spent you have nothing to show for it because demons are enjoying your money. Which kingdom are you serving? Do you even know how to serve the kingdom of heaven? Let's be honest with ourselves, serving the kingdom of darkness is what we excel in the most. Holding grudges, refusing to forgive, holding on to bad feelings toward others, undermining, criticizing, and judging others; we do not need a manual for these, we excel naturally. But have you ever asked yourself why sinning comes easier than being obedient to the Word of God?

You know that if someone close to you were to betray you right now you will hate them, hold a grudge against them, gossip about them or even try to avenge yourself. But whether you will forgive them, that would be foolishness, wouldn't it? I mean, they did betray you, did they not? Your anger is justified, is it not? Take a look at your track record, there is more sin than there is obedience to the Word of God. Where is your heart rooted? In your money? In your car? In your children? In your education? Where your hope is, that is where your strength is. If your hope is in God, that is where your strength will come from—to sin will not be easy, but to be obedient to the word of God will come naturally.

As human beings, we lack the ability to be obedient to God's Word. That is why Jesus provided us with a helper (**John 14:26**) because it is impossible for a human being to act on what is written in the Word of God without the help of the Holy Spirit. And yet, the Holy Spirit does not just hang around you just because you say you are a Christian, no! The Holy Spirit holds on to the word of God that is in your heart. When you open your heart to forgiveness, the Holy Spirit Gives you the strength to forgive. When you open your heart to loving your enemy, blessing those who curse you, and giving to the needy, it is the Holy Spirit that gives you the strength to do so.

Where is your hope? That money you are so desperately in need of, will it save you when death comes you? Does your money have the power of healing? Can your money protect you from demonic oppression? Where is your hope? In what are you rooted? There are two kinds of prosperity: one

comes with pain, sorrow, hatred, anger, jealousy, bitterness, unforgiveness, laziness, a troubled heart, and the like. Unfortunately, this is the one that many Christians are constantly praying for. The other kind of prosperity is like nothing you can ever imagine, it is divine, unstoppable; it cannot be seen with the naked eye, and as a result, it cannot be destroyed. No moth or rust can touch it, and no thief can steal it because it is out of Satan's reach (**Matthew 6:19-21**). You live your life chasing what Satan can attack, chasing what he can easily reach and steal, destroy and use to kill you. These material possessions, these earthly possessions, what is it that you believe they will grant you?

How many people are killed by the same cars they were crying for? How many people are in debt because of the money they so desperately needed? How many people are hurt and broken by the relationships they were so desperate for? If you can see it with your naked eyes, it will never offer you peace. That is why today Satan wants you to believe in what you see with your fleshly eyes because he will have you in his trap.

"By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."

Hebrews 11:3

What you see with your naked eyes may not necessarily be true. You may see a poor person, and yet, tomorrow they may be your leader. To the naked eye, it seemed as though Job lost everything he had, and yet, at the end of it all, he had double of what he previously had. To the naked eye, it seemed as though Moses lost the prestige and privilege that came with being a prince, and yet, in the end, he was a king of God's nation. What is your situation, what troubles are you facing right now? The more potent question would be: Why are you in that situation?

Your marriage is not struggling because your partner is doing this or not doing that, no. Your marriage is struggling to survive the test of time because you married for the wrong reasons. Your business is not struggling because of economic stress; it is struggling because your heart is full of fear. Whether it is marriage, a job, business, parenting, or even your studies; it is impossible to move forward in any of these without peace.

"...and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

Ephesians 6:15

It is impossible to move forward in life without peace. When we talk of peace, we are not talking of you receiving a promotion at work, getting married, buying a car, or your business growing, no! You can have all those things but still have no peace of heart. This means that whatever you receive will

be good now, but in time will turn against you. True peace has nothing to do with the material, but everything to do with the immaterial. That same car you celebrated when it first arrived is the same car that is now taking you places you are not supposed to go. That same partner you could not wait to spend the rest of your life with on your wedding day is the same one you are complaining about to your friends and family. That money you were so excited to receive is the same one that turned you against your friends and family making you believe they are jealous of you.

Material possessions will never give you peace. And this, to my delight, brings us back to that point I cited earlier: Your goals (plural), and God's goal (singular) are two entirely different things. You want a successful business, you want a car, you want a fridge that is always stocked with food, you want to be healthy, you want children, a beautiful or handsome partner, you want this, you want that; simply put, you want all the finest things this world has to offer. Your goals are rooted in satisfying your fleshly desires, they are rooted in feeding your physical. God, on the other hand, desires only one simple, but very complicated thing for you: Salvation of your soul. Jesus had only one assignment: To reveal salvation to us.

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword."

Matthew 10:34

Jesus did not come to eradicate sickness & disease; He came to give us a weapon powerful enough to fight against it. Jesus did not come to eradicate poverty; He came to give us a weapon powerful enough to fight against it. But what is this sword that He speaks of, how do we pick it up and use it effectively? Mind you, this is a weapon that we had as human beings but lost it. Though we did not lose it in the sense that *it* disappeared, but rather, our hatred for each other, our anger, and our unforgiveness blinded us to it and its powers. When you look at your life, and everything that is happening around you, does it look like *you*, and everyone else around you are winning? Do you see progress? Even the most successful people in the world are dying from incurable diseases, car accidents, and gunshots; who is winning? Every single person on the planet is battling, however, whether or not they win is largely dependent on the weapon they use. So, which weapon are you using?

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

Ephesians 6:12

Satan wants you to believe that your brother or sister is the enemy. Satan wants you to believe that your neighbor is the enemy. Satan wants you to believe that your colleague is the enemy. Many families today are broken because they are fighting the wrong battle; against each other. If there is no peace in your family, know that the devil is enjoying, that is how he wants things to be. Satan has led you to believe that poverty is fought with money. How can you fight demons with money? The kingdom of darkness has made you believe in doctors more than God—that is, he has made you believe in treatment more than healing.

Sin has made us believe that our intelligence has the capability of changing our lives, of improving these very difficult situations that we are facing daily. We have succeeded in giving names to demons; high blood pressure, heart attack, cancer, poverty, AIDS, arthritis, and many other sicknesses and diseases. The more we claim to be bettering our lives, the worse they get. But how does Satan manage to manipulate us so easily? You get married today, whether tomorrow or 25 years later, you get divorced. You open your own business today, and sweat, blood, and tears later you are forced to permanently close its doors. Today you are good friends, tomorrow you are sworn enemies. Today your child is doing great at school, tomorrow they are committing suicide, they are addicted to drugs or moving with the wrong crowd. You were joyful yesterday, but today you are depressed, why? Why does the devil have so much power over our lives?

A person's life is comprised of three plans. The first plan is yours: You want this, you want that, you want that car, you want to buy a house in that area, that job, you want *that* kind of a lifestyle. The second plan is the devil's plan for your life: He wants to destroy you like this, he wants you to marry that person, he wants you to live in that area, to have that job, to give you this, and to give you *that*. The third plan belongs to God, and it is quite simple: God wants to give you salvation. The unfortunate thing is that your plans are parallel to the devil's plans for you. Look at how many relationships you've been in, no one forced you into them, but here you are.

You claim you want a job; however, you are unaware that Satan is capable of providing you with a job. Do you want marriage? And yet, you are unaware that Satan is capable of providing you with a partner because you believe that marriage is money, marriage is good looks. How many relationships have you been in? Does your job give you peace? Do your children give you peace? Everything that is going wrong in your life began first with you, you are the reason for all your troubles. *You* are the one who opened the door for the devil in your life. How is your relationship with God?

The prophets of old hoped and prayed that they could witness what we are witnessing today; the coming of Jesus Christ has long been foretold by the prophets of God as far back as the book of Exodus. They knew the glory that was to come with Jesus Christ, and what it meant for the people of God. This thing that Jesus brought into the world, the revelation of God's Word, and the gift of the Holy Spirit is something that we Christians of today are ignorant of, and are greatly undermining. That is why, when we pick up our weapons to fight this war, we pick up the wrong weapons, and we fight the wrong battles the wrong way; we are lost on all fronts. Car accidents, divorce, suicides, killings, kidnappings, poverty, terminal illnesses, crumbling economies; we are taking losses on all fronts.

The book of Revelations tells us that in the coming of Jesus, He will be armed with a sword in His mouth, which we know to be the Word of God. *That*, and only *that* will He need to defeat the enemy. So, What kind of weapon are you using?

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Hebrews 4:12

When Jesus was tempted by Satan (**Matthew 4:1-11**), He was able to overcome the devil because His faith was in the Word of His Father. He had committed His heart to living His life being obedient to the Word of God. That is why, whatever that came His way, whatever challenge He came across He was prepared for it, and He was always victorious. Jesus believed in the truth of God’s Word, and because of that, He had no reason to worry, He had no reason to doubt His Father’s power to deliver Him from all that He faced.

Even as a twelve-year-old, Jesus knew His journey, and how it will end. This was not just because He was the son of God, no! This was because of His faithfulness to God. That is why miracles were of normal occurrence to Him, because the Spirit of the Lord, and the Word of the God were one in His heart. Jesus did not come in the flesh to show off the love that God had for Him, Jesus came to reveal the power and authority that was given to us through the Word and the Spirit of God. All that He did, the love, the forgiveness, the unity, and all the miracles; we too have been given the power to do. What are *you* doing?

In all honesty, everything you are concerned about or crying for is physical, not spiritual. You cannot have it both ways. You say you are a Christian, so answer me this: that trouble you are facing, are you worried because you believe that God is not capable of resolving it? If you *do* believe that God *is* capable of resolving it, then why are you worried about it? It is because you serve a God you do not know. Just like the sons of Sceva (**Acts 19:13-16**), this Jesus that you speak of, you only see Him in other people’s lives, but cannot point to Him in your own life.

This is why Christians of today use what they see with their physical eyes, they use material possession to measure the grace of God in their lives. Those that do not know God do not know what a real blessing is, they are more concerned about the affairs of this world than they are about their salvation. If you do not know the things of the Spirit, if you do not understand the things of the Spirit, surely you will gravitate to the things of the flesh, because all fleshly things are of human discernment. You put too much trust in your human wisdom; that is why you assume your driving abilities will keep you safe from a car accident, and that is why you believe a high-paying job will secure you, and your family’s future.

You believe that you are in control—wait until trouble comes, you will see just how powerless you are. No one wakes up in the morning and decides, *“I want to lose a leg today.”* There is no parent out there who looked at their newborn child and said they want their child to grow up and be a drug addict, a serial killer, a rapist, a thief, a con artist or a false prophet. Though it might be easy to point fingers and lay blame for your troubles, the truth is, it began with you. Your troubles are the result of your

ignorance. The devil will never attack you with anything else, but what you fear. It first began in your heart, then later manifested into this impossible situation that you are now facing.

What is it that you fear? Is it death, financial struggles, sickness, having rebellious children? Whatever it may be, be ready to face it. How else will God show you that He is above all that fear that you are harboring in your heart? What is left for you to do is to open your heart, be patient, no matter how dire the situation may seem to you, and be still, God is working it out for you. God's time is not minutes, hours, days, months, or years, God's time is not when we want it to happen; God's time is the best. Because then, and only *then* will the blessing be permanent. If it happens when you want it to happen, it will not stand the test of time. You know exactly what I'm talking about: How many blessings have come and gone in your life?

Seek first the kingdom of God. Jesus was not betrayed by outsiders but by His own disciple, a Christian follower. Be careful! It is not non-believers or the kingdom of darkness who are leading the children of God astray, but Christians themselves. Buy a car and they will celebrate you, make a lot of money, get married, or achieve whatever other fleshly material and they will celebrate you. But when have you ever heard them celebrate someone for forgiving and letting go of a grudge? When have you ever heard them celebrate someone for giving a helping hand to their enemy or for giving food to the needy? It is because we live our lives outside the Word of God, and yet, with the expectation of receiving its rewards. We celebrate the world and ignore the kingdom of heaven.

The world is not in disarray because the kingdom of darkness has seized control, no. The world is in disarray because people have given the kingdom of evil power and authority over their lives. People have gone from loving God to hating God and blaming Him for all that is going wrong in their lives. Which God are you serving, and which kingdom are you walking in? God never promised to keep us out of trouble, but He promised to be with us and see us through all our troubles. Do not be ignorant: for as long as you are alive, there will always be trouble in your life. Yes, you *will* have seasons of rest where everything is just going fine, not a single problem in site. But be prepared, because that means challenges are on the way. What trouble are you going through, how are you facing it? Is it with or without God? God's peace is not determined by your situation; whether trouble or no trouble, God's peace abounds. Those who believe in God know that troubles, afflictions, or persecutions are not meant to destroy us, but are meant to strengthen us and prepare us for our future. That is why the word of God says,

"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing,"

James 1:2-4

Be careful out there, many false prophets have gone out into the world, just as Jesus had warned us. But Jesus never said they will be obvious; those that are obvious to the naked eye are just there to fool you into thinking you know what a false prophet is. Just as the Lord says, *"Do not touch My*

anointed ones”, and you look at these pastors with platforms, ignorant to the anointing on that neighbor you hate so much, ignorant to the anointing on that drug addict you hate because they stole from you; all because you believe in what you see with your physical eyes, and not in God’s truth.

Those who know the God they serve know their future with God. I do not know what tomorrow will bring, but I *do* know God’s purpose for my life, my assignment on this earth. It is not an easy thing to know, you don’t just drop down on your knees and pray, expecting God to disclose it to you. I’m no saint, but a sinner. All I did was repent, open my heart to God, and He did the rest. Many people today are walking around in robes that do not belong to them. Just because you have a creamy voice you think you are a worshiper. Churches are holding auditions and unknowingly *hiring* devil worshipers. I’m not exactly sure what verse auditions are, I might have missed that one. It is a sign that it is not the Spirit of God that is in charge in our churches, but something else entirely; there are no grey areas in things of the spirit.

You discover you have an ability to preach so now you want a crowd in front of you, ignorant to the fact that all human beings have this ability. Anyone can preach, but it is God who gives anointing. If people knew just how much of a time waister preaching to a crowd is, the world would be in a better place. The truth of the Word of God is not spoken, it is given.

“Depart in peace, be warmed and filled’, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?”

James 2:16

If I asked you now to tell me about the love of God, how much God loves me, you’d probably never finish. We all have the ability to preach, it comes naturally, it is not a spiritual gift. But if I asked you right now to *SHOW* me the love of God, to *SHOW* me just how much God loves me, you’d scratch your head in confusion not knowing what to do. But such are Christians of today; Christians of knowledge, but not Christians of faith.

You will know that you are a true Christian when you start acting upon the Word of God.

I pray that God bless His Word in our hearts in the mighty name of Jesus Christ.